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AN HISTORICAL INQUIRY

INTO SOME OF

THE CHIEF PARALLELISMS AND CONTRASTS
BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY

AND THE

RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD.

With special reference to prevailing Difficulties and Objections.

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CORRIGENDA.

p. 49, l. 4 (from bottom), *for of read to.*

p. 103 (note, col. 2), l. 10 (from bottom), *for hervorgegangen read hervorgegangen.*

52

CHAPTER I.

Characteristics of Egyptian Heathenism.

Οὐ μόνον δὲ τούτου [Ὅσιριδος] οἱ ἱερεῖς λέγουσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων θεῶν, ὅσοι μὴ ἀγέννητοι, μηδ' ἀφθαρτοί, τὰ μὲν σώματα παρ' αὐτοῖς κείσθαι καμώντα καὶ θεραπεύεσθαι, τὰς δὲ ψυχὰς ἐν οὐρανῷ λάμπειν ἄστροι, καὶ καλεῖσθαι κύνα μὲν τὴν Ἰσιδος ὑφ' Ἑλλήνων, ὑπ' Αἰγυπτίων δὲ Σῶθω, Ὡρίωνα δὲ τὴν Ὠρου, τὴν δὲ Τυφῶνος, ἄρκτον. εἰς δὲ τὰς τροφὰς τῶν τιμωμένων ζώων, τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους συντεταγμένα τελεῖν, μόνους δὲ μὴ διδόναι τοὺς Θηβαῖδα κατοικοῦντας, ὡς θνητὸν θεὸν οὐδένα νομίζοντας, ἀλλὰ ὃν κολοῦσιν αὐτοὶ Κνήφ, ἀγέννητον ὄντα καὶ ἀθάνατον.

EUDOXUS in Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, c. xxi.

ON resuming this investigation into the distinctive phases of religious thought among the dominant nations of antiquity, the reader will be next invited to a sphere whose influence on the early march of civilisation it were difficult to overstate. The Valley of the Nile had ever since the oldest Pharaohs been the border-land, or point of confluence, where the African was brought into direct communication with his Asiatic brother, and the East was intermingling with the West. As one of the succession of luminous centres, which, emerging here and there amid the dimness of primeval history, are traceable from the Mediterranean to the utmost bounds of Eastern Asia, Egypt, in some branches of her sacred institutions, will be found to have remarkable traits in common with the Aryan conquerors¹ of

CHAP.
I.

*Importance
of ancient
Egypt.*

¹ See Mr Kenrick's *Ancient Egypt*, I. 105 sq., Lond. 1850, where after handling the subject very fairly, he concludes 'that there has been some connexion between the civilisation of Egypt and India, while the nations

themselves have as much claim to be considered distinct as any others of antiquity:' cf. Sir J. G. Wilkinson's last publication, *The Egyptians*, Pref. pp. ix. x. Lond. 1857. Baron Bunsen, *Phil. of Univ. Hist.* I. 191, is

2 *Characteristics of Egyptian Heathenism.*

CHAP. the Panjáb; while her monuments, alike in area
I. and in massive grandeur, will remind us also of
those primitive ages when the Mayan architect was
rearing kindred structures¹ near the rivers of the
New World.

Its connexion with the neighbouring countries.

But full as such analogies may be of interesting speculation, in reference to the ultimate extraction of the human family from one common stock, our present business is to mark the place and character of Egypt during the historic period, and as standing in more intimate relations to the people of her own immediate neighbourhood. The reputation for superior knowledge once enjoyed by all 'the children of the East country' was believed to be the special heritage of the Egyptian priests (cf. 1 Kings iv. 30). Their cloisters were the recognised abode of art, of science, of religious mystery. Assyrian sculptors learned at Memphis what with greater or with less precision they have reproduced at Nineveh. The sons of Abraham, who like himself went down in search of shelter from a grievous famine, were constrained by closer contact with Egyptian modes of life to throw aside their old nomadic habits; and at length when they returned victorious to the land of promise, the great host was marshalled by a captain, who had grown to manhood in the court of Pharaoh, and was 'learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians' (Acts vii. 22). Thither also in the dawn of western civilisation came the young philosophers of Hellas², panting

far less guarded in his phraseology :
'The exploded notion as to an original connexion between India (the youngest child of Asia) and Egypt (the deposit of primitive undivided

Asia) is as groundless as it is absurd.'

¹ Part III. p. 134.

² The evidence on this point is all collected in Lepsius, *Chronol. der Aegypter*, 'Einl.' pp. 41 sq.

for some deep and transcendental lore, or listening with the eagerness and awe of children to the stories which had long been whispered in the learned circles of On, of Thebes, of Memphis; so that he who is desirous of understanding the precise development of human thought, alike in Western Asia and in Europe, in Athens, Rome, or even (some would tell us) in Jerusalem itself, must take up his position at this fountain-head of wisdom, and from thence survey the parting of the mighty stream as it flows forth into contiguous regions¹.

Now the scholar of the present age has many fresh facilities² for the successful carrying out of such investigations. The recovery of the hieroglyphic character has given; and is still giving every year, a new complexion to the ancient history of the Valley of the Nile. We can no longer speak of Egypt barely as the 'land of ruins,' or the birth-place of insoluble enigmas; her true title is the land of sculptured monuments,—of monuments again made vocal to the ear of science, and from which their secret must ere long be wrested more completely by the ardent pupils of Champollion. Favoured by the excellence of the material, and the singular purity and dryness of the climate, the co-

CHAP.
I.

*Advantages
enjoyed by
the inquirer
of the pre-
sent day.*

¹ Uhlemann scarcely overrates the influence of Egypt, when, after sketching its position in the ancient world, and its relation both to Greeks and Hebrews, he adds (*Thoth, oder die Wissenschaften der alten Aegypter*, p. 6, Göttingen, 1855): 'Aegypten muss als ursprüngliche Quelle alles dessen betrachtet werden, was in späterer Zeit an diesen beiden und anderen von denselben abhängigen

Völkern bewundert und angestaunt wird; ohne eine gründliche Kenntniss dieses Urquells kann Keins von beiden richtig erkannt, beurtheilt und gewürdigt werden.'

² 'Egyptian archæology and history have undergone a complete revolution since the commencement of the present century.' Kenrick's *Preface*.

4 *Characteristics of Egyptian Heathenism.*

CHAP.
I.

*Variety
of monu-
ments.*

lossal tombs and temples, to say nothing of those minor works of art dug out of the sepulchral chambers, have preserved a rich variety of inscriptions, more or less decypherable, and more or less conducing to an accurate knowledge of the past. 'There was not a wall, a platform, a pillar, an architrave, a frieze, or even a door-post, in an Egyptian temple, which was not covered within, without, and on every available surface, with pictures in relief, and with hieroglyphic texts explaining those reliefs. There is not one of these reliefs that is not history: some of them actually representing the conquests of foreign nations; others, the offerings and devotional exercises of the monarch by whom the temple or the portion of the temple on which the relief stood, had been constructed...There was no colossus too great, and no amulet too small, to be inscribed with the name of its owner, and some account of the occasion on which it was executed'.

*Sanguine
hopes of
Egyptology.*

We can easily understand that when the power of reading these inscriptions began to be recovered, men would turn with fresh enthusiasm to the study of Egyptian antiquities. Here, at least, they seemed to argue, we are building on a definite and stable basis. Our materials are no more of doubtful age and questionable reputation. The mind and spirit of that ancient world, with which we long to hold communion, left its impress deeply graven on the face of pyramids which tower, as they have towered for ages, high above the sandy flats of the adjoining desert. There, accordingly, if ever, we may hope to find the master-clue which is to guide

¹ Osburn, *Monumental History of Egypt*, I. 195, substantially from Lepsius, *as above*, pp. 36, 37.

us through the intricacies of primeval history, reveal afresh the hopes and fears which then were struggling in the human bosom, and resolve for us, it may be, many an arduous problem which concerns the origin, the early wanderings, and the final destiny of man. CHAP.
I.

Nor can we say that expectations of this kind have been entirely disappointed. Very large accessions to our knowledge of the ancient East have flowed, and are still flowing, from investigations of the learned Egyptologer. As we gaze for instance on the long array of monumental paintings in our great Museums; as we listen to interpretations of the hieroglyphic texts by which those paintings are accompanied; the daily life of men who were perhaps contemporary with Moses has again been vividly depicted on the dullest imagination. We behold as well the toils, the sufferings, and the pastimes of the many, as the power and luxury of the few. The peasant labours at the plough or tends his cattle, while the lordly owner of the soil is near him in a two-horsed chariot. The goldsmith and the scribe, the potter and the glass-blower, the boat-builder, the weaver, and the dyer, each is occupied in his appropriate calling. Here we see a group of idlers watching the caprices of a game of ball, or listening in the midst of flowers and perfumes to the music of the seven stringed harp: while there a countless multitude are shaping the materials of some stately edifice, or pressing a beleaguered town, or marching home victorious with a lengthened train of captives. *Actual discoveries.*

It seems to be confessed, however, by the great majority of Egyptologers, that notwithstanding the *Small assistance rendered to*

6 *Characteristics of Egyptian Heathenism.*

CHAP.
I.

the theological student.

number and minuteness of these revelations, our familiarity with monuments of ancient Egypt has contributed in no proportionate degree to our acquaintance with the inner being of the people. The manners of the Old Egyptian we may thoroughly appreciate: his mental and moral life is still obscurely apprehended. Means are now at hand for studying the grotesque configuration of his gods, and tracing out the smallest details in his pompous ritual; yet the thoughts which underlay those symbols, and found utterance in those sacrifices¹, must be learned, if ever, from a different source and by a different process.

Scope and spirit of the present inquiry.

If I venture, therefore, on a fresh discussion of such problems, it is not from any wish to speak with confidence where confidence is really unattainable. I do not purpose to invade the province of the Egyptologist whose main conclusions are no longer open to dispute; but rather, taking those conclusions for a guide, wherever they are held in common by the learned in each special study, my aim will be to estimate the leading characteristics of Egyptian heathenism, as one of many forms in which the moral wants and instincts of our nature found expression during the first ages of the world. In doing this, however, exception will be freely taken to the crude and arbitrary theories of some modern writers², who, not content with 'reconstruct-

¹ 'When we endeavour to penetrate into the conceptions which this splendid ritual expressed, we encounter insuperable difficulties;' Kenrick, I. 349: cf. I. 437.

² That English critics are not alone in their misgivings with respect to

some of Baron Bunsen's generalisations may be gathered from an extract like the following. The author, Dr Max Uhlemann, is also an Egyptologist of no mean reputation (*Ägyptisch. Alterthumskunde*, III. 12, Leipzig, 1858): 'Bunsen's Untersuchungen

ing' almost every text which militates against their favourite dream of a society 'existing many thousand years before the date usually assigned to the Creation,' are further bent on sacrificing to a spirit of conjectural criticism the highest of all Christian teachings and the best convictions of the human heart.

CHAP.
I.

The great antiquity which is now commonly attributed to Egyptian culture has in several cases been connected with the thought, that in the Valley of the Nile, the prominent forms of social and religious life had been completely stereotyped at once, and so distinguished in all future ages by an air of absolute immobility.

Was Egyptian civilization always the same?

Now the same conclusion, we must bear in mind, was formerly adopted with respect to India and the regions of the Further East. So meagre was our knowledge of the subject, when presented to us by the earliest race of Oriental scholars, that the Védas and Puránas, for example, were regarded as not only products of the same age, but also as reflecting the same modes of thought, the same archaic aspects of Hindú society. There, however, the unanimous verdict of a riper criticism, while fatal to pretensions of unfathomable antiquity, has certified us that the national spirit both of India

Parallel case of India and China.

sind unbezweifelt und unbestritten ein geistreiches Werk, ... aber in der Chronologie enthalten auch sie, wie die aller übrigen Forscher, nur Muthmaassungen und unerweisbare Annahmen, die jedoch durch die Zuversichtlichkeit, mit der sie auftreten, dem *unaufmerksamen* Leser als unzweifelhaft erscheinen dürften, da

durch Zahlenveränderungen, durch willkürliche Textverbesserungen, durch Hinzuthun oder Hinwegnehmen von Jahresangaben der Alten schliesslich Alles auf wunderbare Weise vortrefflich zu stimmen und sich wechselseitig zu bestätigen scheint.'

8 *Characteristics of Egyptian Heathenism.*

CHAP. and of China had been subject, in the lapse of ages,
I. to extensive fluctuations¹.

*Mobility of
Egyptian
art, lan-
guage, and
religion.*

And a like remark is equally true of Egypt, even while she bowed beneath the sceptre of the Pharaohs. Her supposed exemption from the law of human mutability is vanishing with every fresh accession to our knowledge. The minute inspection and decyphering of her monumental archives have disclosed to us a series of important transformations, have established the existence of successive strata of development, and thus contributed to make us conscious of distinctive epochs in the life-time of the whole community². It may be, indeed, that all the principal characteristics of Egyptian culture, had, as in the case of China, been projected with so much rapidity at first, that we can never hope to understand the origin and real infancy of the people³. It may further be contended, that the nationality of Egypt, or the genius which distinguished her from African and Asiatic neighbours, was 'very much the same' in earlier and in later times. All statements of this kind if not unduly pressed convey a large

¹ Part II. pp. 24 sq. Part III. pp. 21 sq.

² 'Avant que les dernières découvertes des égyptologues eussent jeté un jour précieux sur la chronologie des premières dynasties, sur les transformations et les altérations qui se sont opérées dans la langue, dans les institutions, dans le culte et les arts des Égyptiens, on se figurait que tout avait été immuable parmi eux. On prenait la vieille Égypte en bloc comme un monolithe historique qu'il fallait tirer du sable dans lequel il

était enfoui, et l'on ne distinguait ni les localités ni les époques.' Maury, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (1855), Tom. XI. p. 1053.

³ Wilkinson, *The Egyptians* (Lond. 1857), Pref. p. vii. who adds (p. viii.) that 'the general character of the people, as of their architecture, had been long established when we first become acquainted with them from their monuments, and continued to be the same till the decline of Egyptian power.'

amount of truth; they serve to represent the *general* fixity of corporate as of personal idiosyncrasies; and yet we can no longer doubt that after Egypt had begun to print her records on the pyramids of Ghizeh and Sakkarah, she passed through numerous and important changes,—changes which affected not only her political institutions, but the character of art, of language, of religion.

CHAP.
I.

The second province, that of language, where some modifying agency had been at work, I leave for the discussion of the competent Egyptologist¹. The third will come more properly before us at a future stage of our inquiry; but the point relating to the gradual changes in the quality of Egyptian art it is expedient to consider now, because the epochs thus obtained are thought by some who are most-eminently learned in such matters, to agree with main divisions of Egyptian history in the Pharaonic era.

The character of art at different periods.

It is commonly admitted that the finest specimens of Egyptian art² are those which have the fairest claims to be regarded as the oldest,—those which fall within the period of the ‘first twelve dynasties.’ The bloom of youth is ever traceable on the productions of the early race of artists; all the statues and bas-reliefs are executed with surprising truthfulness and vigour; and although we must allow that both in purity and finish several

Early period.

¹ See the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, as above, pp. 1055 sq. on the recent labours of M. de Rougé in this special province.

² See *The British Museum* (Egyptian Antiquities), two volumes in the ‘Library of Entertaining Knowledge.’ Mr Osburn, *Monumental History of*

Egypt, I. 260 sq. (Lond. 1854), infers from the absence of all crude and ‘imperfect’ works of art in Egypt that the skill of the primitive artists was a ‘portion of that civilisation which its first settlers brought with them when they located themselves in the valley of the Nile.’

10 *Characteristics of Egyptian Heathenism.*

CHAP. I. works belonging to the close of this great period indicate considerable progress, it is no less certain that the character of the whole is so distinctive as to mark it off completely from the period next ensuing.

Middle period.

In the second stage of art, embracing monuments of 'the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties,' the fervour and simplicity of earlier times have been succeeded by a large amount of stiffness and conventionality. It is the Middle Age of Egypt; during which the symptoms of deterioration are constantly apparent, even where the vast proportions of the works constructed must excite our deepest admiration of the power and energy of the builders.

Period of renaissance.

With the 'twentieth dynasty' commences a fresh era, the age of revival, when the artists of the Valley of the Nile, reverting to the ancient models, executed their works with far greater freedom; yet this period also was of short duration, and when Egypt was absorbed into the empire of the Ptolemies, and finally of the Cæsars, she retained but little of the old artistic spirit: all attempts to mingle Greek with native methods issued in comparative failure, and hastened the extinction of her pristine glory.

Length of intervals.

If, however, it be now established to the satisfaction of most writers that transitions of this kind are really visible on Egyptian monuments, far less has been effected in determining the point of primary departure, or the *length of time* to be assigned to each successive period of Egyptian history. I shrink from a minute investigation of the chronological difficulties by which the present sub-

ject is confessedly embarrassed. While discussing the religions of ancient India, it appeared to be sufficient for my purpose if I pointed out the general *order* of the changes which had supervened upon the old mythology and habits of the people; and a similar course would be adopted now, if statements were not hazarded in various quarters with the object of discrediting the Bible¹ as a whole, by ridiculing what is called the 'Mosaic chronology.'

CHAP.
I.

How far, indeed, the Books of Moses, in their present state, supply materials for constructing any definite system of chronology has long been questioned by the ablest and most reverential of our sacred critics. The important variations of the Hebrew and Samaritan texts on one side, and the Septuagint and certain passages of Josephus on the other, have involved the period reaching from the Deluge to the seventieth year of Terah in comparative obscurity. The whole duration of that

*Difficulties
connected
with the
biblical
chronology.*

¹ See Part I. pp. 61, 63, where two American champions of human inequality adopt this line of argument. In like manner, the account of the Deluge, which was prevalent both in the Old and New World, is said by M. Bunsen and others to have left no echo whatever in the hieroglyphic legends of Egypt. Their avowed object in reiterating this statement is to shew that the emigration of the Old Egyptians must have been 'ante-Noachian,' and indeed many thousand years before the date ascribed by them to the 'Caucasian' deluge. But the silence which has been alleged in justification of their statement is apparently a mere invention of deter-

mined theorizers. Osborn, for example (l. 239, 240), says with reference to objections on this very subject: 'We have no hesitation whatever in stating our conviction, that Lepsius is mistaken;' and accordingly proceeds to demolish the 'stupendous pile of inferences which are built on this single assumption.' And Uhlemann, in like manner, is completely at variance on this point with Lepsius and Bunsen. He declares (*Agypt. Altert.* III. 10): 'Die ägyptischen Priester *wussten sehr wohl* von einer Zeit, in welcher nach göttlichem Rathschlusse das sündige Menschengeschlecht vernichtet wurde,' &c.

12 *Characteristics of Egyptian Heathenism.*

CHAP. period in the Hebrew is no more than 352 years;
I. while in the Vatican manuscript of the Seventy it
extends as far as 1172 years¹.

*Untrust-
worthy cha-
racter of
some Egyp-
tian tradi-
tions.*

But the indefiniteness arising from this cause will never justify the random guesses of some modern Egyptologists, who, dazzled it would seem by the occasional brilliance of their own discoveries, are carrying back the civilisation of the Valley of the Nile to ages long anterior to the earliest glimpse of history in other regions of the world. Those writers should remember, while demanding our entire belief in catalogues of kings and 'palace-registers,' that in the North of India where the course of civilisation was most parallel to that of Egypt, we have means of proving the untruthfulness of similar documents, and are able to convict their authors of antedating one event of great importance by as many as twelve hundred years². Those writers should again remember, that the testimony of Egyptian priests is not above suspicion; that Herodotus and Diodorus both derived their information from the same authorities, and yet that while Herodotus extends the number of obscure descendants of Menes to 330, Diodorus limits them to 52; and while the former makes the native monarchy of Egypt to have lasted in all 11,340 years, the calculation of the latter stops short at 4,700³. These, and other discrepancies, are so 'enormous and so fundamental as to preclude the idea that they can have been superinduced by

¹ The sum total for this period, according to the various authorities, is *Heb.* 352; *Samar.* 942; *Septuag.* (Vat.) 1172; *Septuag.* (Alexand.)

1072; *Josephus*, 1002.

² Lassen, *Ind. Alterth.* I. 501.

³ Kenrick, *Ancient Egypt*, II. 84, 85.

lapse of time, and a variety of narrators, on a history originally authentic.' CHAP.
I.

And on turning to the works of Manetho, the earliest¹ of native historians, who died in the third century before the Christian era, we find that such of his remains as have descended to us must be taken at third hand. His famous lists of kings commence with gods, with manes and with heroes, who are said to have held sway in Egypt for a period of more than thirty thousand years; and even if it were conceded that a writer of his age, the first Egyptian priest who had been gifted with 'historic consciousness,' was equal to the task of carrying back the annals of his country for three or five thousand years, an obstacle was lying in his way which must have stubbornly resisted all real progress. Vast as may have been the astronomical knowledge of the Old Egyptians, great as was their aptitude in framing chronological cycles², they 'do not appear at any time to have reckoned in

*Manetho's
lists of
kings.*

*Want of
an initial
epoch.*

¹ 'We hear of no historical work of that people before Manetho.' Bunsen, *Egypt's Place*, I. 23. Yet the *History* of this native writer, as distinguished from his *Dynasties*, is now lost: while the latter work (edited afresh in Bunsen, I. 605 sq.) is known to us only through Julius Africanus, and Eusebius, and from them through George the Syncellus, a Byzantine monk of the ninth century; of whom it should be added that he places the Creation 5500 B.C. and arranges all his dates accordingly.

² Cf. Uhlemann, *Aegypt. Alt.* III. 2, 9. Both he and Lepsius are of opinion that the Sothis-period conducts us back to at least 2782 B.C. Mr Browne, the learned and labori-

ous author of the *Ordo Sæclorum*, has, however, called in question almost every one of the results obtained by German Egyptologists (see his able papers in Arnold's *Theological Critic*, I. 529 sq., II. 125 sq.). Mr Browne contends that all the native lists of kings are based on cyclical relations, the different cycles being referred to different epochs. According to his view, the *regular* chronology of ancient Egypt is reducible to one cycle, dating from 1805 B.C. (the reign of Joseph's Pharaoh). The 'reduced chronology' has also found another learned advocate in Mr Nolan, *The Egyptian Chronology Analyzed*, Lond. 1848.

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CHAP.
I.

*Contem-
poraneous
rulers.*

their public monuments by an *era*, like that of the Olympiads, but only to have dated events, as we date acts of parliament, by the years of the king's reign¹. If Egypt, therefore, was in early times divided into several petty kingdoms; or if the names of co-regents, of pretenders, of provincial governors, assuming to themselves the royal style, were entered on the lists of dynasties, the sum of all the regnal years obtained by this process would very far exceed the true number. A large exaggeration is, indeed, acknowledged now by all our Egyptologers. It is believed that rulers in the primitive nomes, or cantons, may at first have been entitled kings, and also that the starting-point of calculation coincided in particular cases not with the accession to an undivided sovereignty, but with the time at which some ruler was admitted to the rank of a co-regent: for although the sum of regnal years, commencing from the earliest of the human rulers, and ending with the last of Manetho's dynasties, amounted to at least 5000, the number actually assigned upon the same authority as the duration of the *whole* period was not more than 3555 years².

But if despairing³ of results which rest on this

¹ Kenrick, II. 95.

² Lepsius is disposed to take his stand on this number, which comes down to us through George the Syncellus (cf. *Kritik der Quellen*, p. 499). The Egyptian years being reduced would give 3553 Julian years for the duration of the thirty dynasties of Manetho; and this, added to 339 (the year B.C. when the last dynasty expired) would also give 3892 B.C.

for the foundation of the monarchy. Uhlemann, on the contrary, persists in dating the reign of Menes, the first king of Egypt, 2782 B.C.

³ 'The recovery of Egyptian chronology, except by slow degrees, and with intervals of unknown lengths between the reigns that are known, is hopeless.' *Engl. Review* (1846), p. 114; an article on *The Pyramids and their Builders*, attributed to Dr Hinckes.

precarious basis, we commence our exploration from the age when Egypt is first drawn distinctly into the general history of the world, and so endeavour to trace out her course in the reverse order, we arrive at early points of synchronism about 972 B.C., when Shishak¹ (Sesonch) of the '22nd dynasty' invaded Palestine, and in the fifth year of Rehoboam 'took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house' (1 Kings xiv. 25). And as Shishak was the first member of a new dynasty, it follows that a Pharaoh of the previous series was father-in-law of Solomon (1 Kings ix. 16), and that Tahpenes, the sister of the Egyptian queen, had been espoused to Hadad, the Idumæan, as early as the reign of David (1 Kings xi. 19 sq.) On these points, indeed, there is no longer any difference of opinion; but the placing of the Exodus itself, the next event where contact with the annals of the Hebrew nation is undoubted, still continues to present some formidable difficulties; inasmuch as it is found to be entangled² with a further question touching the expulsion of the Shepherd-Kings, or Hyk-sos, and their previous rule in Lower Egypt.

Nor in passing upwards, from the origin of what is called the New Kingdom, or the first reign

CHAP.

I.

Points of synchronism with sacred history in the New Kingdom.

The Middle Kingdom.

¹ Browne, *Ordo Sæclorum*, § 513.

² See one of the best discussions of this point in Kurtz, *Gesch. des Alten Bundes*, II. 173—203, Berlin, 1855. He advocates the old and very plausible theory that the 'Phœnician' shepherds had invaded Lower Egypt in the period between Abraham and Joseph; and that the new dynasty (corresponding to the 18th of Mane-

tho), who persecuted and enslaved the Israelites, were princes of Egyptian blood who had eventually regained the sovereign power. The only serious objection to this view arises from the thoroughly *Egyptian* aspect of the court in the time of Joseph; but Dr Kurtz has also done very much towards the removal of this difficulty (pp. 199, 200).

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CHAP. of the '18th dynasty' has greater concord been estab-
I. lished among writers who profess to be our guides
through the confusion of the period next preceding.

*Its existence
problematic.*

The duration of the three dynasties ascribed to it by Manetho is found to vary in the different systems of Egyptian chronology from 511 to 953 years; while other writers, arguing from the total want of monuments which bear the dates of kings later than the 12th dynasty, and earlier than the 18th, have begun to ask with some show of reason, 'Is the Middle Monarchy a real thing or not¹?' Whatever be the true answer to this question, it is plain that till far more is known with certainty respecting such important intervals, we have but little hope of framing any rational hypothesis, or of inditing a coherent narrative.

*The Old
Kingdom.*

And the same perplexity must haunt us on ascending to the 'Old' division of the Pharaonic monarchy. The names of kings belonging to that era are now extant, it is true, in very great profusion².

¹ Dr Hinckes in *Engl. Review*, as above, p. 117. Mr Kenrick also admits the fact that 'not a single contemporaneous work of art has been found, from the 13th to the 18th dynasty.' He adds, however, (II. 194): 'These things are not sufficient to make us doubt the fact of the invasion and expulsion of the Hyk-sos; but they may excite a suspicion that the chronology of this period of oppression and confusion is not to be relied on, and that as usual it has been unduly extended.' I ought also to remind the reader at this point that M. de Rougé thinks he has at last discovered an allusion to the Hyk-sos rule on a papyrus relating to a war undertaken by a king of

the Thebaid against the shepherd-king Apepi (Aphobis). The shepherds are there treated as enemies of the gods of Egypt. *Revue des Deux Mondes*, as before, p. 1063: cf. Brugsch, *Die Geographie des alten Aegyptens*, I. 50 sq. Leipzig, 1857.

² Especially in the famous Turin papyrus, which before mutilation must have contained 3 or 400 royal names (cf. Herod. II. 142), with the precise lengths of reign attached to each: see Sir J. G. Wilkinson's *Fragments of the Hieratic Papyrus at Turin* (privately printed, 1851). The same author in his last work *The Egyptians*, &c. (1857), while granting that the high antiquity once assigned to some of the monuments is now 'brought

Monuments commencing with the time of Chufu (Suphis, Cheops)¹, the builder of the Great Pyramid, continue to bear witness to the fact that even at the opening of the '4th dynasty' the lower valley of the Nile was tenanted by an ambitious and accomplished people, organised into a regular community, as in the age of Abraham and Joseph, and already in possession of the hieroglyphic character, as well as of the reed-pen and the ink-stand.

Yet in spite of all these interesting revelations, Egyptology contributes very little towards the unriddling of the old question, namely, as to which of the primeval dynasties were contemporaneous, and which of them successive. One distinguished writer (as Bunsen) searches for the missing key among the chronological fragments of Eratosthenes, corrected, however, by his own hand; a second (as Lepsius) manifests no confidence in this auxiliary, and gropes his way alone to very different results; a third (as Mr Browne, or Mr Nolan, or Mr Osburn) would curtail the length of early dynasties far more than either of the previous explorers; so that on arriving at the first event distinctly traceable in the archives of the infant colony,—the founding of Memphis, by the oldest of their mortal kings², the

CHAP.
I.

The chronological problem still unsolved.

within more reasonable limits' is clearly of opinion that those of the fourth dynasty (the earliest of all) were executed not less than 2400 years B.C. (p. 3).

¹ Kenrick, II. 133. On the identification of the names, see Dr Hinckes, as above, p. 102.

² The author of the article *Egyptus* in Smith's *Dict. of Greek and Roman Geography*, thinks that the word *Menes* is itself suspicious: it 'too nearly resembles *Manu*, the *Minyas*

and *Minos* of the Greeks, the *Menerfa* of the Etruscans, and the *Mannus* of the Germans [cf. Sansk. *man* "to think"] to be accepted implicitly as a personal designation.' Eratosthenes, however, explains *Mῆνις* as equivalent to *Αἰώνιος*, which is said to be justified by the Old Egyptian and Coptic use of *men* (μν) in the sense of 'to persevere:.' Uhlemann, *Aegypt. Alt.* III. 82. On the occurrence of the name upon Egyptian monuments, see Osburn, I. 226 sq.

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CHAP. I. 'Romulus of Egypt,'—nearly all our certain knowledge of the epoch when some mighty change was supervening on the population of the Nile-valley, may be gathered up into the vague conclusion of Josephus; who informs us that 'Menes, who built Memphis, preceded Abraham by many years'.

*Primitive
state of
Egypt:*

But what, in such a case, may be conjectured of the primitive or pre-historic age anterior to the reign of Menes, and the first migrations of the tribe from which he was descended?

*why of
importance
in this in-
quiry.*

This inquiry is again of vast importance to the proper conduct of the enterprise immediately before us; since the ethnological affinities of heathen nations may justly be expected to throw light on the formation of their mythology.

*Connexion
with sacred
history.*

Some Christian writers have attempted to identify the founder of Egyptian civilisation with Ham (or Cham), the son of Noah; others with Mizraim, one of Ham's descendants: and although the efforts of those writers seem to me extremely infelicitous, the words on which their arguments are principally based, will prove, I think, suggestive of more tenable conclusions.

Chami.

One native name of Egypt is *Chami*² (χημι), connected with the Coptic *χαμε* 'black'; while the appellation almost universally current in Semitic countries is *Mizraim*³, *Misr*, or *Mezrén*, the fullest of these forms, we should remember, being itself

Mizraim.

¹ *Antiq.* VIII. 6, 2, ed. Havercamp.

² See Part I. p. 63, n. 4. Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, c. XXXIII. gives the following account of the word: *ἐτι τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἐν τοῖς μέλιστα μελάγγειον οὖσαν, ὥσπερ τὸ μέλαν τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ, Σημίαν καλοῦσι.*

³ Knobel (*Die Völkertafel der Ge-*

nesis, p. 273) is disposed to question the ordinary derivation of this term *מִצְרַיִם* from the bipartite character of Ancient Egypt (Upper and Lower). He urges that Isaiah (xi. 11) distinguishes Pathros, or Upper Egypt, from Mizraim, the remainder of the country, which could hardly have

a Hebrew dual noun. And on reverting to the genealogical table transmitted in the family of Abraham (Gen. x. 16), it will appear that in the series of Ham's descendants the first place is there allotted to *Cush* (a common name for 'Ethiopians'); and the second place to *Mizraim* (or the Old Egyptians, occupying the two divisions of the Nile-valley). Attention seems to have been thus directed to the fact that all the earliest layers of population, as well below the frontier-island of Elephantine as throughout the present Nubia and Ethiopia, were originally homogeneous,—a result which is corroborated by Egyptian history and in no wise inconsistent with modern discoveries.

Yet some of these discoveries have, I think, necessitated a fresh hypothesis with reference to the dominant race of Egypt in the period of the early Pharaohs. Like the Aryan conquerors of the Pan-jáb, they do not appear to be the primitive masters of the soil, but rather a deposit of new-comers, dating from some later epoch. The numerous paintings on the monuments, as well as osteological investigations in the tombs, will hardly suffer us to doubt that the Egyptians proper, even of the earlier dynasties, exhibit few decided characteristics of the woolly-haired or negro race, but constitute in some respects an independent people¹,—of a type

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I.

Who were
the primi-
tive civi-
lizers of
Egypt?

been the case, if the Hebrews used *Mizraim* as equivalent to *both* divisions. Knobel has accordingly suggested a fresh origin for the term: 'Dieser Dual gehört zu einem nicht vorkommenden Singular מִצְרַיִם.....er bedeutet also eine doppelte oder zweiseitige Einschliessung und bezeich-

net Aegypten ganz passend als ein von 2 Seiten eingeschlossenes Land' (p. 274). But the analogy of other duals (such as Jerusalem = ἡ κἀρω + ἡ καθύπερθε, Joseph. *Ant.* v. 2, 2) is in favour of the ordinary derivation.

¹ Uhlemann (*Aegypt. Alt.* III.

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CHAP.
I.

*Earliest
seat of
civilisation.*

which, ethnologically speaking, is described as intermediate between the Syro-Arabian and the Ethiopic. There is very great uncertainty¹ again as to the point at which the leaders of the second colony effected their original settlement in the Valley of the Nile. If we might argue from the fact that monuments adjudged the very oldest are all found in Lower Egypt, not far from On (or Heliopolis), the city which became in after-times one special centre of religious worship, it would seem most probable that the new race of immigrants crossed over by the isthmus of Suez, or the natural bridge connecting Africa with Asia; yet a contrary

57) is very emphatic on this point: 'Nicht von der Geschichte dieses dunklen Stammes hängt die Geschichte der politischen Entwicklung und Cultur der alten Aegypter ab, sondern vielmehr, wie alle noch erhaltenen Denkmäler beweisen, von einem Stamme ganz anderer Abkunft und Farbe...' Cf. Prichard, III. 227 sq., who infers that notwithstanding considerable diversity in figure and complexion, the Old Egyptians as a body 'had something in their physical character approximating to that of the negro' (p. 230).

¹ This uncertainty is connected with the vexed question as to the course pursued by the early civilisers of the Nile-valley. Did they advance northwards from the Thebaid to Lower Egypt? Such is said to be the general verdict of antiquity (Knobel, as above, p. 275); and Ezekiel in particular (xxix. 14), seems to speak of Pathros (Upper Egypt) as 'the land of their birth' (מְצֻרָתָם), the cradle of the whole Egyptian people. Thebes was in

like manner taken for the oldest of Egyptian cities: whereas it seems to be the general opinion of living Egyptologists that the southern *monuments* at least (whatever may be said of the people) are far more modern than those of Lower Egypt (Osburn, *Mon. Hist.* I. 211); and that Thebes was really the metropolis of the first dynasties, not of the Old but of the *New* kingdom. Other accounts, however, tend to reconcile these two conflicting theories by pointing out that although historical Thebes is younger than Memphis, the course of civilisation did at first flow northwards; Memphis being itself built by an accomplished prince of Abydos in Upper Egypt. In connexion with this point arises the old inquiry respecting the possible influence of Hindûs in shaping the original institutions of Egypt (above, p. 1, n. 1); and also the tradition respecting sacerdotal colonies from Meroë in Ethiopia (Diodor. I. 33: III. 3—6).

hypothesis, which represents the civilisers of the Nile-valley as a band of priests descending from the Ethiopian frontier, has been also able to attract a number of influential supporters.

Whatever be the ultimate decision of that controversy, a belief in some great secondary immigration, such as I have just indicated, is now current in all schools of Egyptology¹, not excepting writers who are driven to ascribe the act itself to an unfathomable antiquity. At first, it may be, while the powerful chieftains, such as Menes, were all struggling to consolidate the primitive tribes or cantons² into a regular monarchy, the old inhabitants continued to preponderate as largely as the Gauls in France, who though succumbing everywhere beneath the arms of Clovis, had been able to preserve the language³ of their former masters and

CHAP.
I.

*Fusion of
the conquer-
ors and
the con-
quered.*

¹ e. g. Bunsen declares, *Egypt's Place*, I. 443, that the facts established by modern researches into language and mythology give us precisely the same result. 'Both carry us historically back to Asia.'

² These *νόμοι* (thirty-six in number!) into which the valley of the Nile was parcelled out are carried back by Diodorus (I. 54) to the time of Sesostris or Sesöosis (Ramses II?): yet, as is well remarked, 'they did not originate with that monarch, but emanated probably from the distinctions of animal worship; and the extent of the local worship probably determined the boundary of the nome:' cf. Herod. II. 42.

³ The most opposite views are still entertained respecting the affinities of the Coptic, or, with slight corrections, of the *Old Egyptian* language. On the one side, it is

argued that the syntax of that language, and not a little of the vocabulary also, are related closely to the Hebrew and other members of the great Semitic family. A second class of writers look upon the Old Egyptians as intermediate between the Semitic and Indo-European families. ('The roots of the Egyptian language are, in the majority of cases, monosyllabic, and, on the whole, identical with the corresponding roots in Sanskrit and Hebrew. This is said advisedly:' Bunsen, *Phil. of Hist.* I. 185). A third class utterly deny the alleged connexion between Coptic and Hebrew: e. g. "Auch die älteste Sprache der alten Aegypter stand mit den sogenannten semitischen in gar keiner Verbindung; erst spätere Verkehrsberührungen haben einige Ausdrücke, besonders von Kleidern, Gefässen, Maassen

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I.

communicate both it and their religion to the great majority of the Franks. A like amalgamation may have followed in the early centuries of the Pharaonic empire; and subsequently when the Hyk-sos gained possession of all Lower Egypt and the seat of native power had been transferred to Thebes and to a neighbourhood in which the Cushite spirit still predominated, the great fusion may have been again more rapidly promoted, till at length historians had to deal with a community, consisting, as before, of diverse elements, imperfectly attuned to each other, yet so mixed as to produce what we entitle the specific nationality of Egypt.

Why no
regular
account is
here taken
of the oldest
Egyptian
mythology.

Now of these two factors, one, as in the somewhat parallel case of India, will be here comparatively disregarded. I am not attempting to investigate the characteristics of *primeval* heathenism in the Nile-valley, except so far as it has left its impress on ideas and institutions which belong as properly to the historic period. The remarks already made in sketching the religions of barbaric tribes, wherever scattered on the surface of Asia, of America, of Oceanica, would frequently apply with equal justice to the continent whose people we are now considering,—not to provinces alone in which the black or negro type of man evinced his

und Gewichten, aus der ägyptischen Sprache in die orientalischen oder umgekehrt übergehen lassen.' Uhlemann, *Aegypt. Alt.* III. 58. In this opinion of an eminent Coptic scholar acquiesces the present Regius Professor of Hebrew, at Cambridge, who has kindly aided me in the examination of the string of words adduced as parallel by Mr Birch,

Egyptian Hieroglyphics (appended to Sir J. G. Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*), p. 251. Professor Jarrett is of opinion that it is impossible to establish any relationship between the Coptic and the Hebrew of a closer kind than that which, ethnologically speaking, may be said to exist between 'a Greek and a Negro.' See Appendix I.

true humanity by emerging here and there into historical importance, but also in that vast expanse of moral barrenness, which stretches southward from the Mediterranean to the Cape, and eastward from the burning cliffs of Guinea to the pestilent mouths of the Zambesi¹.

Yet even when the sphere of study is thus definitely narrowed, it becomes important to discriminate afresh between the earlier and the later periods of Egyptian history. Our judgment, with respect to the development of religion in that country, should be formed apart from clashing theories which come down to us through Greek writers; for although Herodotus, in spite of the absurd misrepresentations of his dragoman, has furnished a large mass of information which is proved to be trustworthy by according in the main with extant monuments, the other tourists and philosophers who handled the same topics, when the Delta was in part Hellenised, and society most deeply tinged by the foreign modes of thought, can seldom challenge our assent in the same proportion. The Thebaid, it is true, was still comparatively isolated, and as such continued firm in its profession of the hereditary faith, until the sweeping edict of Theodosius, in A.D. 379; but on the founding of the Hellenic capital of Egypt by Alexander the Great, the country as a whole, had witnessed the commencement of a new era, in philosophy as well as in political relations. The adornment of the great Museum of Alexandria with the obelisks and sphinxes of the Pharaonic cities, was itself an emblem of the fresh eclectic spirit, then and there

CHAP.
I.

*Further
discrimina-
tion of the
early from
the Helle-
nised Egypt-
ians.*

¹ See Appendix II.

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CHAP. I. imported into all discussions of the old mythology¹.

Neo-Platonist theories respecting the mythology of Egypt.

One result of such eclecticism has been, that writers (native and Hellenic) of this later period, and especially the Neo-Platonist champions of expiring heathenism, as Porphyry, or Iamblichus, or Proclus, have at times so spiritualized or sublimated the religion of the Old Egyptian, and assigned such arbitrary meaning to the symbols of his ritual, that the primary ideas which it embodied, will as seldom be derivable from their writings, as the first mythology of India can be ascertained from speculations of the school of Kapila, or from the aphorisms of the Védānta. Each of the opposing theories started long ago by this class of writers is reflected in the kindred contradictions of modern philosophers. One, for instance, may be heard contending that the basis of Egyptian mythology was altogether materialistic²; another, on the contrary, that it was always an exalted system of pure idealism³, which taught men to enshrine the highest and

¹ 'Alexandrie et la cour des Ptolémées étaient surtout le théâtre de ce mouvement syncrétique qui rapprochait la théogonie pharaonique du polythéisme grec systématisé par les philosophes.' *Revue des Deux Mondes*, as before, p. 1072.

² This was the position actually maintained by Chæremôn, the Stoic *λεπογραμματοῦς* who was chief librarian of the Serapeum, in the former half of the first century after Christ. According to his view the chief divinities of ancient Egypt were the seven planets and the twelve signs of the zodiac (cf. Uhlemann's *Thoth*, p. 250). In their mythology he re-

cognises no incorporeal Principle, or unseen Intelligence. Prichard's general leaning is in the same direction (*Egyptian Mythology*, Lond. 1819); for, following in the steps of Eusebius (*Evangel. Præparat.* lib. III. c. 4), he concludes that the 'worship of the Old Egyptians was directed towards physical objects; or the departments and powers of nature' (p. 34).

³ Thus Porphyry addressing a priest named Anebo inquires as to what the Egyptians really held to be the First Cause,—whether an intelligent principle (*νοῦν*) or something *ὐτὲρ νοῦν* (cf. a criticism of this passage

most abstract truths beneath the guise of earthly symbols and to recognise a master-spirit guiding the whole mechanism of physical creation. But there is reason to believe, as we shall see hereafter, that neither of these theories have done justice to the rude conceptions of the old mythographer¹. He looked at nature with a deep but thoroughly child-like interest, seldom conscious of the metaphysical antitheses which enter into all our modern speculations; and accordingly his power of separating between the natural and the spiritual was very different from our own, or even from the corresponding faculty of his descendant, who might strive to systematise his notions, when the mythic age of heathendom was drawing to a close.

In seeking therefore to unite ourselves afresh with that remoter period in the history of Egyptian thought, the natural course is to inquire if any written monuments are extant corresponding to the Hindú Védas and the 'sacred' books of the Chinese. Now Egypt also had a class of writings which may fairly be regarded in this very light. The ancient melodies, which Plato tells us were preserved from age to age as the productions of the goddess Isis², point to the existence and diffu-

CHAP.
I.

*Egyptian
sacred
books.*

in Creuzer, *Symbolik*, II. 269); and is answered by Iamblichus who assumes the name of an Egyptian priest, Abammon (*De Mysteriis*, VIII. 4, ed. Gale, 1678). His solution is that the Egyptians by no means affirm the physical origin of all things; but 'distinguish both the animal life and principle of intelligence from nature itself, not only in the universe but also in man' (cf.

Creuzer, as above, p. 270).

¹ This judgment which accords substantially with Creuzer's (p. 276) will be also found in Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, p. 217 (Lond. 1857). He argues that in 'Egypt natural and spiritual powers were regarded as most intimately united.'

² *De Legibus*, II. 4 (*Opp.* VII. 516, Bekk.): cf. Diodor. I. 53, 72; XVII. 50.

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sion of a 'sacred' literature. The common name applied to all such writings by the Greeks was 'Books of Hermes' (their reputed author being scribe of the gods, or the 'Mercurius' of the old mythology). From Clement of Alexandria¹ we can also ascertain the general character of these Hermetic books; for when he wrote the custom was to have them carried in procession through the temple of Isis by the heathen priests of the metropolis. The whole number (two and forty), comprehending various treatises on secular subjects, as on medicine, astronomy, and the chorography of Egypt, consisted of extensive disquisitions on religion and philosophy², and also of minute directions for the 'sealing of victims,' the due oblation of the appointed sacrifices, the observance of solemn feasts, the training of the young and more especially of members of the sacerdotal class, together with the full routine of duties daily claimed from the Egyptian either by the laws of his country, or by gods whom he believed to exercise especial sway in his own neighbourhood.

*Extant
sources
of infor-
mation.*

These works, however, with perhaps one sole exception, have been long unknown to Egyptologists, and are probably beyond the reach of modern exploration. The exception, which there seems at

¹ *Strom.* lib. vi. c. 4 (Opp. II. 756, ed. Potter): cf. Lepsius, *Chron. Einleitung*, pp. 45 sq. and Mr Birch, *Egypt. Hieroglyph.* (as before), p. 186, where several titles of Hermetic Books are brought together. Bunsen, who considers the 36 books (excluding the last six on medicine) in five classes, (1) Two Books of the Chanter, (2) Four Astronomical Books

of the Horoscopus, (3) Ten Books of the Hiero-Grammatist, (4) Ten Ceremonial Books of the Stolistes, (5) Ten Books of the Prophets (Priests),—has summed up his inquiry by admitting that they 'contained no single section of pure history' (I. 23).

² ὧν τὰς μὲν λς' τὴν πᾶσαν Αἰγυπτίων περιεχούσας φιλοσοφίαν οἱ προειρημένοι ἐκμανθάνουσι. *Ibid.*

least some valid reason for acknowledging, is the famous *Book of the Dead*, or *Ritual*¹; portions of it dating backwards, we are told, as far the '12th dynasty' and thus preserving to us a considerable fragment of the older Pharaonic times. In one department of our subject,—the supposed condition of the human soul after death, and the religious service rendered by her in the world invisible,—I hope to profit largely by suggestions borrowed from this quarter. With regard, however, to the leading characteristics of the old mythology, all other data now accessible to ordinary scholars are less copious and explicit. They consist of hieroglyphic names, or titles, or genealogies of gods, surviving with appropriate emblems on the various tablets, tombs, and obelisks; of colloquies between the gods and kings; of sacred formulæ, as chants in honour of some divinity, or prayers for the deceased, or exhortations to survivors, each transmitted to us on rolls of papyri, and most of them deriving fresh elucidation from reports of Herodotus, or else from statements drawn by Plutarch out of theological works of Manetho.

The question which, as heretofore, excites our special interest at the very outset of our task has reference to the old Egyptian theories on the central truth of all religion,—the being and attributes of

CHAP.
I.

*How far
the older
heathenism
of Egypt
was mono-
theistic.*

¹ Edited, in hieroglyphs, by Lepsius, with the title *Todtenbuch der Aegypter* (Leipzig, 1842). Mr Birch, who is at present engaged upon an English translation of the whole, has given a short epitome of this curious volume in *Egypt. Hierogl.* pp. 271 sq. Portions of the work

in extenso have moreover seen the light through other channels. I may also remark that the followers of the Seyffarth (anti-Champollion) school of interpretation have already access to a German version of the *Todtenbuch* in Seyffarth's *Theolog. Schriften der alt. Aegypter*.

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God. Now in replying to this question it is commonly admitted that Egyptians had no single word in use by which to indicate the grand idea of a Supreme Intelligence. It may be that such term had never been unknown to the initiated few, though treated as unutterable in all ordinary circles¹; yet the statement thus suggested carries with it also the admission that belief in one only God was far from being the established creed of the Egyptian people. And in strict accordance with this fact is the exceeding paucity² of statements and allusions which imply exclusive worship in one district of one sole divinity³. The aptest parallel to such phenomena is found, if I mistake not, in the history of Hindú religions. With a vague idea of unity which lingered in the background of his metaphysical system ages after it exerted any practical effect, the Old Egyptian had been fascinated more and more by the mysterious powers and processes of nature, till abandoning the ancient faith in God, he bowed in adoration of the world above, beneath, around him. He was still indeed possessed of phraseology which betokened some original con-

*Parallel
case of
India.*

¹ Wilkinson, who leans to the idea of some original monotheism, has suggested this account of the matter. The points, however, which Herodotus declines to publish (*e.g.* II. 62) were of a somewhat different kind. On the reputed ἀπόβητα of the 'greater mysteries' in Egypt and elsewhere, see Warburton, *Div. Leg.* Bk. II. sect. 4.

² 'It is worthy of remark that the worship of the supreme God is scarcely mentioned in the history of the Egyptians.' Prichard, *E. Mythol.*

p. 292.

³ See the motto at the head of this chapter, which is the passage generally adduced as evidence of a belief in one supreme God, *Kneph*, the ram-headed god of the Thebaid, 'unbegotten and immortal.' The assertion of Plutarch was not true, however, of any early period known to history; and subsequently *Ammon* or *Ammon-Ra* was far more generally worshipped in that region, if we except the island of Elephantine: see below, p. 39.

ception of a Power superior to the physical elements, and even was accustomed to transfer to it the properties of spirit, as volition and intelligence, which in himself he felt to be inseparable from the true idea of power. He spoke at times of 'a great builder,' 'a creator of the universe,' 'a creator self-created,' 'a soul of the sun,' 'a lord of the two horizons,' a chief 'father of the gods,' 'a mother' also 'of the gods,' a god who was 'the husband of his mother,' 'a goddess-mother of the highest god,' whose glory was that she 'proceeded from herself;' nay, so completely had these forms of speech been tinctured with monotheism as to lead in many writers to a firm belief that all the various gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt are personifications only of Divine omnipotence, or rather are the issue of an intellectual struggle, which was bent on forming the most worthy thoughts of God, and paying homage in the vast profusion of its titles to one personal Deity.

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But strict analysis¹ of all such titles, when conducted in the light which we derive from a comparison of other ancient systems², will be sure to make

*Practical
polytheism
of the
system.*

¹ 'We can find no sufficient evidence for the opinion that the various gods of Egypt are but symbols and personifications of the attributes and powers of one Being, whom the priests, if not the people, recognised as the only true God.' Kenrick, I. 437. The great Cudworth who took his ideas of Egyptian theology from Iamblichus and other writers of that school, contended, not unnaturally, that the invisible gods of the pagans are the Divine attributes deified (*Intel. Syst.* II. 237 sq. Lond. 1845). He then proceeds as follows (p. 245): 'The pagan theology went

sometimes yet a strain higher, they not only thus supposing God to pervade the whole world, and to be diffused through all things... but also Himself to be in a manner all things. That the ancient Egyptian theology, from whence the theologies of other nations were derived, ran so high as this, is evident from that excellent monument of Egyptian antiquity, the Saitic inscription often mentioned: "I am all that was, is, and shall be":' see below, p. 36.

² Cf. Part II. pp. 14 sq., Part III. pp. 28 sq.

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I

us hesitate before subscribing to this grand conclusion. Here, as there, it is discovered that so far from such personifications carrying up the mind to a transcendent unity, in which 'all the gods of the Egyptian mythology met and became one,' the opposite result has been more generally apparent. The bright memory of one only God has faded from the human spirit; His functions have been all assigned to a succession of subordinate divinities, who constitute *the* objects of Egyptian worship; and the want of fixity or depth in man's religious conceptions is again betrayed at every turn, by the facility with which he can attribute the same glorious titles to different divinities.

Its pantheistic basis.

The simplest key to all this vagueness and apparent vacillation is contained in the hypothesis, now frequently adopted, that the primitive form of paganism in Egypt was really pantheistic. Till the process, by which single powers of nature were gradually personified, had issued there as elsewhere, in the *humanising* of the earlier race of elemental gods, it was impossible to fix the line of demarcation by which one was distinguished from the other. The attributes were interchanged, the powers themselves were seemingly confounded, because they all at first were viewed as finite emanations of some all-pervading energy. 'Nature' thus became the highest god of the Egyptian priesthood; while the people brought their offerings to some one or other of the manifold powers of nature. Their divinities in general corresponded to the functions of the different sexes; they were either paternal or maternal, active or passive, generative or productive; now believed to be exerting their specific influence from

the loftiest spheres of being; now in beasts that minister to our convenience, or in hideous reptiles that are crawling at our feet; at one time challenging the homage of the Old Egyptian in their simplest form of light or fire, of earth or water; at a second stooping down from his unclouded sky on gracious or malignant missions; at a third descending more completely to the region of the senses, or identified with local objects, and especially with that phenomenon which was and is the crowning wonder of his native valley,—the rise, the overflow, the retrogression of the waters of the Nile.

This rapid survey of the old Egyptian theology receives, indeed, most ample illustration as a fuller insight is obtained into the meaning of the ancient monuments. As early as the visit of Herodotus¹, and probably for ages long anterior, the Egyptians were accustomed to distribute all their chief divinities into three special classes, the first consisting of eight, the second of twelve members, and the third, perhaps, of an indefinite number, all of whom were said to have been generated by gods of the previous class, as these owed their existence to the first. Some difficulty, it is true, has been experienced in determining which gods should be admitted to a place in the first of the three orders; and it seems most likely that Egyptians of different provinces² would even in the age of Herodotus,

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*Different
orders of
Egyptian
divinities.*

¹ II. 145. He is pointing out in this passage that the order of the gods, according to the Egyptians, was very different from the Hellenic view: 'Ἐν Ἑλλήσι μὲν νυν νεώτατοι τῶν θεῶν νομίζονται εἶναι Ἡρακλῆς τε καὶ Διώνυσος καὶ Πάν· παρ' Αἰγυπτίοισι

δὲ Πάν μὲν ἀρχαῖος, καὶ τῶν ὀκτὼ τῶν πρώτων λεγομένων θεῶν Ἡρακλῆς δὲ τῶν δευτέρων, τῶν δώδεκα λεγομένων εἶναι· Διώνυσος δὲ, τῶν τρίτων, οἱ ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα θεῶν ἐγένοντο.

² Cf. Lepsius, *Chronol.* Einl. p. 253, note.

CHAP. I. have stated their belief respecting this great ogdoad with considerable variation.

*Ptah, the
chief ele-
mental god
of Lower
Egypt.*

Still if we may argue from the order in the list where Manetho professes to arrange the several gods', who were believed to have held sway in Egypt, long before all human dynasties, the foremost rank should be assigned to *Ptah*, the Vulcan of the Latins', and Hephæstus of the Greeks. If not the God of all Egypt, he was certainly regarded as supreme within the cycle of divinities who were especially adored at Memphis. One designation of the whole country had moreover been derived in early times from this alleged supremacy: for *Egypt* (*Αἴγυπτος*) seems to be not only identical with *Kopt*, but also a Greek form of *Kah-Ptah*' 'land of Ptah,' the land which recognised in Ptah her chief divinity. The special functions of this god are indicated by his title of 'creator of the sun and moon.' He is not only, like the Greek Hephæstus, eminent for plastic skill, but also is the proper *demiurgus* of the universe, the shaper of primeval matter, the 'leader of the mundane artisans⁴,' or, in the highest and most abstract form of the con-

¹ 'Primus Ægyptiorum deus Vulcanus fuit, qui etiam ignis repertor apud eos celebratur. Ex eo Sol' etc. Manethon. *Dynast.* (printed in Bunsen's 'Appendix of Authorities,' No. II.).

² He is Cicero's second Vulcanus (*De Nat. Deorum*, III. 55) 'in Nilotus, *Phthas*, ut Ægyptii appellant, quem custodem esse Ægypti volunt.'

³ Uhlemann, *Ægypt. Alt.* II. 11, 12, who instances the similar word Ἡφαίστρια, which Greek writers applied to Egypt, and also mentions that the Ethiopic name of the coun-

try is *Gobzo*. The prefix *al* may perhaps be illustrated by such forms as *αἰγυπτός* which was used by Homer for γύψ. Bunsen finds the derivation, or at least the sister-form, of *Ptah* itself in ΠΠΘ 'to open' (*Egypt's Place*, I. 383, n. 252), so that *Ptah* (he thinks) was primarily the 'great Revealer.' Mr Osburn, again (*Mon. Hist.* I. 263), discovers *Ptah* in *Phut*, the fourth son of Ham.

⁴ This is the expression of Iamblichus; cf. Wilkinson, *Anc. Egypt.* 2nd ser. I. 249 sq.

ception, Ptah is the original force of nature and the world-begetting fire¹. CHAP.
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The oldest representation of him was a child or bandy-legged dwarf, reminding us at once of pigmy statues sacred to Hephæstus, and also of the idols (the *Pataikoi*²) carried by Phœnician mariners on the prows of their triremes. But in other, and it seems more recent, representations, Ptah is worshipped under a more perfectly human form. He is entitled 'lord of the gracious countenance' and also 'lord of truth.' As such he is accompanied by a female figure (Truth or Justice) with the ostrich feather on her head³. He holds before him in both hands an emblem of stability or duration, the so-called Nilometer⁴, which is combined with the symbols of life and the kukufa-sceptre. On his head he wears a skull-cap like the pilos of Vulcan; while the body is completely swathed, in mummy-fashion, so that the hands alone are seen protruding outside the envelope. 'Perhaps the swathed body and protruded hands may symbolise the first putting forth of a creative power in action, which had been previously hidden and quiescent⁵.' The same functions are suggested more distinctly by a living emblem, which was specially sacred to the great Egyptian *demiurgus*, viz. the beetle of the Nile (or *scarabæus*). Some indeed have

¹ 'Die erste als Urfeuer gedachte zeugende Kraft.' Döllinger, *Heidenthum und Judenthum*, p. 412, Regensburg, 1857. Similarly Eckermann, *Mythologie*, I. 74, Halle, 1848: 'Er ist das Lebensprincip im Universum, die zeugende Urkraft.'

² Herod. III. 37: see Mr Blakes-

ley's note. The derivation which he seeks is probably to be found in the Egyptian *Ptah*: whence *Pataikoi*.

³ Wilkinson, as above, p. 250; Bunsen, *Egypt's Place*, I. 382.

⁴ Bunsen, *Ibid*.

⁵ Kenrick, I. 380.

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CHAP. I. traced the ground of this connexion to different causes¹; but the instinct which directs the beetle to deposit her egg on the soft wet mud of the Nile, and the astonishing skill with which she frames and finally rolls away 'the ball which is the nidus of her future offspring²,' are such vivid images of functions everywhere ascribed to Ptah, that I prefer this exposition of the symbol to all others which have been suggested.

*Neith, the
primitive
goddess.*

It is one of the prerogatives of Ptah in the Memphitic system of mythology, that he combines within himself the properties of both the sexes. He is one of two androgynal divinities. The second member of this class is *Neith*³, the Greek Athene; Ptah in his exalted rank becoming to the male what Neith is to the female deities: and yet so closely are the functions of the two commingled or

¹ *e. g.* It was believed that the Nile-beetles were all males, or else were altogether without distinction of sex, and therefore fit emblems of creative power, 'self-acting and self-sufficient.' M. de Rougé (*Revue Archéologique*, VIII^e année, p. 53) has given his sanction to this view of the scarabæus-symbol. He also adds (p. 54) that the idea of divine generation as dwelt upon by Iamblichus 'n'est pas un produit de l'esprit philosophique des derniers temps, mais qu'elle appartient à la portion antique et traditionnelle des mystères.'

² See Mr Osburn's minute description, *Monum. Hist.* I. 204, 205.

³ In Plato's time Neith (whom he identifies with 'Αθηνᾷ) was specially worshipped at Sais in the Delta; and Cicero (*De Nat. Deor.* III. 59) speaking of his second Minerva adds: 'orta

Nilo, quam Ægyptii Saitæ colunt;' but, as Mr Kenrick remarks, it is plain from Herod. II. 59, that her worship also extended through the whole country. Mr Blakesley, on Herod. II. 100 argues in favour of the old notion respecting the verbal identity of Neith and Athene. Improbable as this may be (Kenrick, I. 387, n. 1), there is no doubt that we discover an early trace of the Egyptian name in queen Nitocris (Neitokr = 'Αθηνη Νικη). It is also interesting to remark that even Cambyzes, who is commonly represented as waging a quasi-religious war in Egypt, was nevertheless extremely scrupulous in making the due offerings 'to Neith, the divine mother of the principal gods of Sais:' see M. de Rougé's paper in the *Revue Archéologique*, VIII^e année, p. 40.

confounded in some representations that Neith is really the female counterpart of the great *demiur-* CHAP.
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gus. He is the primary paternal element in nature, she the primary conceptive element. He is the father of the sun, she is the mother of the same luminary ('the great cow, engenderer of the sun'). He is the primordial fire, while she is the primordial space or chaos, self-producing², coeternal with him, and coequal, or in other words the 'feminine ether' everywhere diffused as the material basis of all forms of created being³.

In proportion, however, as the old Egyptians learned to *humanise* their chief divinity, they seem to have assigned him a more human consort. The 'beloved of Ptah' was Pasht (Bubastis, or 'Diana'), commonly depicted as the lioness- or rather the cat-headed goddess. Like Neith she was occasionally styled the Great Mother, and as such was represented carrying the emblems of life in her hands. She also was esteemed a great fire-goddess⁴, which explains the real ground of her alliance with Ptah; but, notwithstanding, her precise relation to the older series of Memphitic gods is very difficult to determine.

The next divinity, whose claims to be connected with that series are indisputable, is the sun-god of *Ra, or
Phra, the
sun-god.*

¹ Bunsen i. 386: Kenrick, i. 390.

² Plutarch found this property in her very name, which he interpreted, rightly or wrongly, 'Ἐλθὼν ἀπ' ἐμᾶν ἡς.

³ Cf. the following language of De Rougé, as above, p. 59: 'Dans la génération des dieux célestes ou secondaires, identifiés avec les astres, je comprends encore le rôle maternel

du ciel comme espace, χώρα, et même comme matière, ὕλη, fournissant une portion de l'éther céleste au démiurge pour nourrir ses germes divins.'

⁴ See the passage from Brugsch's *Travels*, quoted by Döllinger, p. 412. That eminent Egyptologist is of opinion that Pasht was again superseded in later times by Neith.

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Lower Egypt, *Ra*¹ (or with the definite article *Phra*); the centre of whose worship was at On (the Heliopolis of the Greeks). By some he is promoted to the foremost place² in the Egyptian pantheon. He alone in the succession of the highest gods is not accompanied by a female counterpart. He only is invested with a plenary jurisdiction. To his honour it was chanted that, while he, and he alone, is the chief 'source of life in heaven and on the earth, he is himself the unbegotten³.' We have seen, however, that the luminary thus adored by the Egyptians, is described in other places as the offspring of Ptah; whom he succeeds accordingly in the administration of the world. We also heard him called the offspring of the goddess Neith, of her who, notwithstanding, had been made to publish almost in the same breath: 'I am the things that have been, that are and that will be; no one has uncovered my skirts⁴.'

*Relations of
Ra to Ptah
and Neith.*

A simple key to all such enigmatical language will be found, if we remember only that Ptah and Neith are the two great parent principles of the

¹ Copt. ϣη 'sun;' φρη 'the sun.'

² Lepsius has of late years warmly advocated this hypothesis in a paper *Ueber den ersten Aegyptischen Götterkreis* &c. read before the *Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1851), and published among their Transactions. His main principle is thus stated (p. 193): 'Es bleibt folglich nur die umgekehrte Annahme übrig, und diese bestätigt sich meiner Meinung nach auf das Bestimmteste von allen Seiten, dass der *Sonnenkult* selbst der früheste Kern und das allgemeinste Princip des ägyptischen Götterglaubens war, welcher vor allen

Lokalkulten vorhanden, in allen einen wesentlichen Theil bildete, und überhaupt nie, bis in die spätesten Zeiten, aufhörte als die äusserliche Spitze des gesammten Religionssystems angesehen zu werden.'

³ See various passages to this effect excerpted by De Rougé, as before, pp. 54, 55.

⁴ Mr Kenrick is undoubtedly correct (l. 389, n. 5) in referring to Deut. xxii. 30 for the explanation of this language. It does not imply the mystery of Neith's being (as De Rougé even seems to think, *Ibid.* p. 59), but the fact of her virginity.

universe, and therefore the creation of the sun, the disentangling of primordial light from darkness, would be naturally regarded as the work of one or both of them, according to the fancy of the different worshippers. The sun, it was concluded, like the other objects of external nature, had begun to be, and therefore owed his being to the Ultimate Principles of all things. This consideration will again enable us to understand the mythological language of some ancient hymns¹, in which the worshipper, excluding from his view the functions of the *demiurgus* and no longer dwelling on the old relation between Neith and Ra, has pictured the diurnal motion of the sun-god, as a species of relapse into his native element. 'Thou sheddest thy beams upon the back of thy mother.' 'Thy mother, the sky, is stretching out her arms for thee.' 'O father of the gods, thou reunitest thyself with thy mother on the western mountain. She receives thee daily into her arms.' 'When thou shinest in the dwelling of Night, thou revisitest the sky, thy Mother.'

It is not indeed unlikely that in very primitive times as well as through the period when such hymns as these were graven on the tombs of Lower Egypt, Ra had been exalted to the highest place in the affections both of king and people. Ramses the Great already sacrificed to him as to 'the lord of the two worlds, who is enthroned on the sun's disk, who moves his egg, who appears in the abyss of heaven'. Ra was thus emphatically *king*² of the gods: and mortals who had been entrusted with the government of Egypt were esteemed in some

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I.

Early prevalence of sun-worship.

¹ De Rougé, as before, p. 56.

² Bunsen, I. 387.

³ Lepsius, as before, p. 194.

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I.*The Pharaohs children of the sun.*

mysterious way his progeny, his favourites, his vicegerents. His own title (Ra or Phra) has reappeared in the official name of *Pharaoh*¹. None of the Egyptian kings², indeed, could be admitted to his office till instructed in the secret learning of the priests, and, where such transfer might be necessary, incorporated with the sacerdotal order: yet as soon as his initiation was completed he assumed a power analogous to that enjoyed of old time by the Incas of Peru and now by Emperors of the Middle Kingdom; he was 'president of the assemblies;' he regulated the whole cycle of religious worship as well as the machinery of the Egyptian state; he was himself the object of one kind of adoration³; for in him the gods, or more especially the king of gods and highest of all potentates, had condescended to exert a more than human energy.

Kneph:

But on passing to the upper province of the Old Mizraim, there is far less certainty respecting the true character of her chief divinities. *Kneph*, or Chnubis, who was once regarded as the master-spirit of the system, as in some degree the fountain of vitality for Ptah himself, and *the* immortal, self-begotten deity of the Thebaid⁴, is adjudged by Lepsius to be one of the most modern products of

¹ Dr Hinckes (*Engl. Rev.* as before, p. 101) has also pointed out that the names of the earlier Egyptian kings consisted in almost every instance of the name of the sun, and a simple or compound epithet or qualification: cf. Müller, *Amerik. Urrelig.* p. 305. Similarly Potipherah, priest of Heliopolis, (Gen. xli. 45) has been explained by Phont-Phra, 'priest of the Sun.'

² Wilkinson, 1st ser. I. 245, 246, 2nd ed.

³ Diodorus (i. 90) speaks even more strongly: *Διὰ δὲ τὰς αὐτὰς αἰτίας δοκοῦσιν Αἰγύπτιοι τοὺς αὐτῶν βασιλεῖς προσκυνεῖν τε καὶ τιμᾶν, ὡς πρὸς ἀλήθειαν ὄντας θεοὺς.*

⁴ See the motto prefixed to this chapter. The story of Ptah springing from an egg, which issued out of the mouth of Kneph (? Copt. *nef*, 'to blow or breathe'), is no older than Porphyry; and although we may allow that the peculiar symbol of the mundane egg is very ancient,

the Græco-Egyptian theorising¹. Only as con-
 joined with Ra could Kneph be styled 'the highest
 god,' and worshipped as the formative or spiritual
 principle. The glorious Ammon, also, who had
 been invested with a like pre-eminence, inasmuch as
 the Hellenic writers were accustomed to entitle him
 the 'Zeus of Egypt,' has been similarly disparaged
 and dethroned by modern criticism². It is contended
 that until the seat of native empire was transferred
 to Thebes, and some amalgamation of the pantheons
 of Upper and Lower Egypt had resulted there in
 the projection of a great compound divinity, who
 bore the title *Ammon-Ra*, the primitive god of
 Thebes was strictly local in his character, and so
 upon a level with the vast majority of deities.

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I.

*Ammon,
or Amun.*

The greater gods of Upper Egypt whom Lep-
 sius places at the head of his new series, imme-
 diately after Ammon-Ra, are *Mentu* (Month) and
Atmu (Tum)³. Yet these again, he thinks, are

*Other
phases of
the sun-
god.*

the use made of it by the Neo-Platonists, in its relation to Kneph, was obviously directed to the establishment of their favourite theory as to the priority of some Intellectual Principle in the old Egyptian system: see above p. 24. Döllinger says of him with apparent justice: 'Seine Auffassung als göttlicher Lebensgeist oder Weltseele scheint erst der spätesten Zeit kurz vor oder nach Christus anzugehören:' p. 411.

¹ As before, p. 164, n. 1.

² *Ibid.* p. 173: ... 'war bis zur Erhebung Thebens wo er als Lokalgott verehrt wurde, ein untergeordneter wenig genannter Gott.' Bunsen on the contrary maintains that 'he stands incontestably at the head of a great cosmogonic development.' (i. 371). However this may be, it is

now generally conceded that many of the earliest attributes of Ammon were identical with those of Khem, the ithyphallic god, or Pan of Herodotus (cf. *Revue Archéol.* xiv^e année, p. 211). Both have the title 'husband of his mother:' both wear the same badge, or head-dress, of long straight feathers; and both are viewed as more especially gifted with generative and productive power. Mr Osburn, in accordance with his theory, finds the son of Noah Cham (Ham) in the Egyptian Ammon (Amun); and Noah himself in Kneph.

³ Cf. Döllinger, p. 410. A learned friend suggests the Copt. *ar-mov* = 'immortal' as explanatory of *Atmu*. In Copt. *mov* signifies 'death'; *move* 'light.'

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both to be regarded as derivatives from the sun-god: they conjointly fill the place ascribed to Ra in the mythology of Lower Egypt; they are 'children of Ra,' the one an emblem of his superterrestrial, and the other of his subterranean power; the one associated with the rising, and the other with the setting or nocturnal sun¹. In this connexion only is it true that Mentu-Ra became the 'god of both the Egypts;' or that Atmu could be called 'the author of all fecundity.' Another of the Theban gods was *Mue* (or Light), who is depicted here and there not only as a son of Ra, but also as the offspring of the solar deities, whose lineage we have just considered. In like manner *Tefnet*, the companion or feminine counterpart of *Mue*, whom Lepsius wishes to include among the greater gods of the Thebaid, is entitled with a similar import, 'daughter of the Sun.'

Probable course of amalgamation in the mythology of Egypt.

It must, however, be acknowledged by all candid minds that no small measure of uncertainty continues to hang over this attempted distribution of the primitive gods of Egypt. We are barely able to discern the outlines of a systematic classification. The fabric of the old theology, if such it may be termed, was built up gradually into a whole by 'the agglutination of parts having a separate origin².' At first, as men relinquished the idea of one great Personal Spirit, ruling all things by His sovereign will, they yielded to the witchery of external nature and bowed down before a concourse of provincial deities: the varying phases of religious thought gave birth to corresponding varia-

¹ Lepsius, as before, p. 187. On this principle he explains the name

'Sun of Night' applied to Atmu.

² Kenrick, i. 363; Döllinger, p. 407.

tions of this first mythology; yet everywhere the felt necessity of relying on a god superior to the many, led afresh to the investment of some member of the pantheon with a relative supremacy; until, upon the union of the several nomes, the greater gods were all more fully merged in two large classes, corresponding to political divisions of the Nile-valley. Such a fusion had moreover been promoted from within by the existence of religious sympathy. A link connecting the mythologies of Upper and Lower Egypt was supplied in all the early stages of their formation by the glorious sun-god, Ra,—the offspring of the oldest gods of Memphis, and identified, as we have seen, with one or more divinities whose native sphere is the Thebaid. Ra was, in like manner, the chief medium for advancing that more perfect amalgamation, which begins to be distinctly visible at a later period: for how grave soever be the faults committed by Herodotus in classifying the old mythology of Egypt, the account is unimpeachable where he tells us, that in spite of all existing variations, the common worship of two deities prevailed in every canton of the great community¹.

These potentates were Isis and Osiris, who, as overlaying or eclipsing all the rest, stand forth conspicuous, from the mouths of the Nile to Elephantine, and supply a centre both of worship for the multitude and speculation for the priestly order. It is probable that certain compound names, like Ptah-Sokari-Osiris², will turn out to be examples

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¹ θεοὺς γὰρ δὴ οὐ τοὺς αὐτοὺς Διόνυσον εἶναι λέγουσι: II. 42.

ἅπαντες ὁμοίως Αἰγύπτιοι σέβονται,
πλὴν Ἰσιὺς τε καὶ Ὀσίριος, τὸν δὴ

² Wilkinson, 2nd ser. I. 253.

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of transition from an earlier to a later way of thinking. They may also have borne witness to religious struggles' and to compromises effected in particular districts. But the fact itself remains indisputable, that in the whole of what is properly entitled the historic period, Isis and Osiris, with a family-circle of inferior deities, are made to play the principal part in the mythology of ancient Egypt.

*Relation of
the Osiris-
group to
other dei-
ties.*

What, then, is the true relation of these deities to gods who were confessedly members of the 'first order'? Did they constitute an independent and contemporaneous group? Or did they actually succeed the others in the manner intimated by Herodotus, and so commence, by their ascendancy alike in Thebes and Memphis, a new period of Egyptian history? Now in answering such inquiries it is most important to remember that the name, the emblems, and a few at least of the specific functions of Osiris, have been actually traced on monuments of high antiquity; for instance, on the coffin of Menkeres (or Mycerinus) belonging to the '4th dynasty.' Commencing therefore from such facts as this we soon arrive at the conclusion that Osiris had for ages coexisted² with Ptah himself in some departments of the Delta; as Brahmá, the younger god of Hindustan, eventually supplanted Indra, the most prominent of Vaidic deities. The solemn worship of Osiris was at first, however,

*Worship of
Osiris at
first local.*

¹ It is well to keep in mind this possible source of change in the religious symbolism of Egypt. Lepsius, as before, pp. 196 sq. has given a detailed account of one struggle between pure sun-worship and Ammon-worship in the reign of Ameno-

phis IV. of the 18th dynasty. The 'reformatory' labours of that monarch were, however, all undone by the reaction 'of the old national hierarchy.'

² Such is also Mr Kenrick's conclusion, I. 358, 359.

circumscribed in somewhat narrow limits. In allusion to that fact he is entitled 'lord of This' and 'lord of Abydos' in Upper Egypt; though for centuries anterior to the visits of Hellenic tourists, it is plain that he was raised to a position of unrivalled majesty, approaching far more nearly than the other members of the pantheon to the rank of one almighty and illimitable God. He gathers up into himself the choicer and more god-like attributes of all the male divinities; while Isis may be taken as the general representative of functions belonging to the opposite sex. The two together form a dyad. Osiris is the active, plastic, generative principle; and as such he is most naturally connected with a female counterpart, who, contemplated under different aspects, will be found to have assumed to him the manifold relations of sister and of spouse, of daughter and of mother³.

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I.

Final development.

There is also reason for concluding that Osiris of Abydos had been gradually identified with Ra, the sun-god of Heliopolis; for such amalgamation is not only implied in the new formula *Osiris-Ra*, but is expressly mentioned in the works of Egyptologists both ancient and modern⁴. Like Ra, Osiris,

How far Osiris was identified with Ra.

¹ Lepsius, as before, pp. 190, 191.

² The same writer has offered a very probable explanation of the mistake of Herodotus in placing Osiris among the tertiary, instead of primary, gods of Egypt. (*Chronol.* p. 253.) Wilkinson had long before observed: 'If Osiris was not nominally one of the eight great gods, he in reality held a rank equal to any.' 2nd ser. I. 158, note.

³ Döllinger, p. 413.

⁴ Lepsius, *Ueber den ersten Aegypt.*

Götterk. p. 194. This writer denies, however, very positively that there was any *genealogical* connexion between the Osiris-group and other old divinities, either in the Memphitic or the Theban series: cf. Diod. I. 11, where Osiris and Isis are plainly identified with the sun and moon respectively. Plutarch (*De Isid. et Osirid.* c. LII.) has given us substantially the same account; and in the monuments we have a further confirmation of this theory: 'ils nous

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 — had a mythological pedigree assigned to him: he was the eldest son of Seb (Κρόνος) and of Nut or Nutpe (Πέα)¹, to both of whom he is declared superior ('greater than his father and more powerful than his mother'). In one respect alone he differs widely from the older sun-god,—in requiring for the exercise of his specific powers the aid of some divinity like Isis, who inherits therefore the peculiar properties of the Great Mother, Neith, while he in virtue of some corresponding interchange with the old fire-god of Memphis reappears on more than one inscription as *Osiris-Ptah*.

*Hymns in
honour of
Osiris.*

Combining thus the several functions of creator, of enlightener, of fructifier, Osiris in that ancient system of mythology, attracted to himself the homage, love and adoration of the whole community². Osirian hymns which are at length accessible to almost every student, will bear ample witness to

apprennent en effet que la divinité qui remplit le premier rôle est le Soleil, et qu'Osiris, comme la plupart des personnages divins dont l'Olympe égyptien est si malheureusement encombré, n'est qu'une forme particulière de cette divinité.' *Revue Archéol.* XIV^e année, p. 193.

¹ This filiation is authorised in the *Book of the Dead* itself (*Rev. Arch.* as before, p. 202): yet the Copt. *voure* seems to mean 'god,' and *voure-ne* 'god of heaven.'

² Cf. Uhlemann, *Thoth*, pp. 27 sq. who remarks with more especial reference to his view of the Egyptian cosmogony which he elicits from the *Book of the Dead*, that it has 'viele Aehnlichkeit mit der mosaïschen, die ohne Zweifel [...] aus ihr hervorgegangen; es findet sich in derselben

Nichts von einem ungeordneten Chaos wie bei Griechen und Römern; auch bei Aegyptern ist die Welt aus Nichts geschaffen, Alles Vorhandene aus der allmächtigen Hand der schaffenden Gottheit Osiris hervorgegangen.' But how, on this hypothesis, can we explain the co-existence of *two* cosmogonic principles, Ptah and Neith, Osiris and Isis? see above, pp. 34, 43. It is surely far more probable that the dualistic cosmogony of the Greeks to which Uhlemann here refers was itself of Egyptian origin. Such a supposition, I may add, is entirely borne out by the narrative of Diodorus (i. 7), who speaks of the sun as being itself a product of the element of fire (τὸ πυρῶδες); just as the Memphitic Ra was the child of the fire-god Ptah.

this fact; for most of them are outbursts of religious feeling, stimulated by the thought of his transcendant qualities. Osiris is the 'lord of life,' 'the king of heaven,' 'the prince of gods,' 'the lord of ages,' 'the light of the world,' 'the dispenser of nutrition,' 'the quickener of the dead,' 'the guide,' 'the judge,' 'the leveller,' and 'the avenger.'

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But instead of swelling this long catalogue of names, which separately taken have an obvious tendency to misinform the reader by suggesting parallels that have no true foundation, I prefer to give one single hymn, as nearly as I may, in its original completeness. It will further serve to introduce us to some other members of the great Osiris-family, and acquaint us with some other aspects of their mythological character. The text of this remarkable hymn is found inscribed upon a *stele*, which the French translator¹ places in the seventeenth century before the Christian era.

One complete specimen of such hymns.

HYMN TO OSIRIS.

"Hail, Osiris! lord of the length of times, king of the gods, of names exceeding many², conspicuous for thy holy transformations and mysterious emblems in the temples: exalted dweller in Tattu³; chief inclosed in Sokhem; master of invocations in Oer-ti; enjoying happiness in Hon; whose right it is to rule in the place of double justice; mysterious soul of him, who is the lord of the sphere; the holy one of the White Wall; soul of the sun; his body itself reposing in Sûten-si-nen; author of invocations in the region of the tree Ner; whose soul is made for

¹ M. Chabas, in the *Revue Archéologique*, 14^e année (1857), pp. 65 sq. pp. 193 sq.

² As the translator remarks (p. 195), one chapter of the *Ritual* (or *Book of the Dead*) enumerates as

many as a hundred appellations under which Osiris was adored.

³ This and the following proper names appear to denote localities especially connected with Osiris-worship.

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watching; lord of the vast abode in Sesennû; greatest of the beings in Shas-hotep; lord in Abydos of the length of timea. The way of his dwelling is in the To-sar¹; his name is constant in the mouth of mortals. He is a god of the earth, an Atûm² who in the midst of gods is showering happiness on the creatures; a beneficent spirit in the place of spirits.

“From him descend the waters of the heavenly Nile. From him proceeds the wind. The air we breathe is (also) in his nostrils for his own contentment and the gladdening of his heart: he airs (or purifies) the realms of space, which taste of his felicity, because the stars that move therein obey him in the height of heaven.

“He opens the grand doors; he is the master of invocations in the southern sky and adorations in the northern; the constellations which move onward are all under his immediate gaze; they form his dwelling-place, as well as constellations which remain at rest³. To him, by the command of Seb [his father] sacrifice is offered: gods in the firmament adore him with respect, divine chiefs with reverence, all with supplications. Those who rank among the venerable ones all recognise his high authority; the whole earth gives glory to him, when his holiness engages in a conflict: he is an illustrious Sahû among Sahûs, exalted in position, permanent in empire. He is the excellent master of the gods, beautiful and lovely. All who see him of whatever country respect and love him. All who have enjoyed his condescension exalt his name to the highest rank. He has the power of command alike in heaven and earth. Abundant acclamations are addressed to him on the festival of Ûk; consentient acclamations from the two worlds.

“He is the elder, the first-born of his brothers, the chief of the gods. He it is that executes justice in the two worlds, and plants the son upon the father’s seat. He is the praise of his father Seb, the darling of his mother Nú [Nut]. Of mighty arm, he overthrows the impure; invincible, he crushes every foe; he strikes terror into all that hate him; he breaks down the

¹ ‘Un lieu que les mânes devaient traverser avant d’arriver à la demeure d’Osiris, l’Hadès égyptien.’ Chabas, p. 70, n. 1.

² i. e. like *Atmu*, the solar deity; see above, p. 40.

³ ‘Nous voyons par notre texte que les Egyptiens se figuraient les *khimou* placés en face du Soleil, qui y faisait ses residences, c’est-à-dire qui y stationnait tour à tour.’ p. 71, n. 1.

barriers of the wicked; ever fearless, he is ever on the alert; he is the son of Seb, commanding both the worlds. He (Seb) has seen his virtues and directed him to guide the nations by the hand to larger measures of prosperity. He (Osiris) fabricated this world with his hand, the waters and the air, the vegetables, all fowls and winged creatures, all fish, all reptiles and four-footed beasts. The earth pays rightful homage to the son of Nû [Nut]; the world rejoices once again, when like the Sun he mounts upon his father's seat; he shines on the horizon, he diffuses dawn upon the face of darkness; he irradiates the light by his double plume; he inundates the world, like the Sun (which shines) from the highest empyrean. His diadem is conspicuous in the summit of the heavens; and is allied (united) with the stars: he is the leader of all gods. In will and word he is benignant, the praise of the greater gods and the delight of the less.

"His sister [Isis] has taken care of him in driving away her enemies by a triple rout; she sends forth her voice in the brilliance of her mouth¹; wise of tongue, her word is sure to prosper. In will and word she (also) is benignant. Isis is her name, the illustrious, the avenger of her brother's wrong. She sought him without resting; she walked the circuit of this world, lamenting him; she rested not until she found him; light was given out from her²; a wind was produced by [the motion of] her wings: she made the invocation at the funeral of her brother: she carried off the elements [elementary particles] of the god of the tranquil heart: she extracted his essence: she made a child [of it]: she gave the foster-child her arm to suck³. The place where that occurred is unknown [to mortals].

"His arm (the child's arm) is become strong in the great dwellingplace of Seb. The gods are overjoyed on the arrival of Osiris, son of Horus, fearless, justified, son of Isis, son of Osiris. The divine chiefs collect around him: the gods recognise in him the universal lord. The lords of justice who are met together to correct iniquity are delighted to pay their homage in the great dwelling-place of Seb to the lord of justice. The reign of justice in that region appertains to him. Horus has found his justification (word of justice): he comes forward

¹ 'Le sens est que la déesse avait le don de l'éloquence.' *Ibid.* p. 75, n. 4.

² The meaning of this clause is said to be doubtful. M. Chabas

renders: 'elle a fait de la lumière avec ses plumes.'

³ See Plutarch, *De Isid. et Osirid.* c. xvi.

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crowned with the royal wreath by order of Seb. He has received the royalty of the two worlds: the crown of the upper region is planted on his head. By him the world is judged in that which it contains: heaven and earth are under his immediate presence ('le lieu de sa face'). He rules all human beings, the pure, the race of the inhabitants of Egypt and the foreign (barbarous) people. The sun goes round according to his purpose, who also directs the wind, the river, the fluids, the wood of living plants and all vegetable nature. As the god of seeds, he is the giver of all vegetation, and of the precious *kufi*: he brings forth abundance and dispenses it to all the earth. Mankind are all in raptures, their feelings (bowels) are delighted, their hearts are full of joy, because of the lord of supplications. Every one adores his bounty: sweet is his love in us; his tenderness surrounds the heart; great is his love in all the feelings (bowels).

"We render justice to the son of Isis: his enemy falls beneath his fury, and the fautor of iniquity at the sound of his voice: the violent is hastening to his end: the son of Isis, the avenger of his father, is close by him.

"Sacred and beneficent are his titles: fear (or veneration) finds his place: his laws command immutable respect: the way is open: the footpaths are open: the worlds are both contented: evil flies before him: and with him as her lord the peaceful earth is waxing fruitful. Justice is established by its lord, who menaces iniquity.

"Delicious is thy heart, O [^]Unnefer (revealer of good), son of Isis! He has assumed the crown of the upper region: the title of his father is recognised for him in the great dwelling-place of Seb. He is Phra when he speaks, he is Thoth in his writings. The divine chiefs are satisfied.

"That which thy father Seb ordained for thee, let it be done according to his word."

*Peculiar
features of
this hymn.*

Reserving the more ethical aspects both of this and other kindred hymns for independent consideration, it is first of some importance to remark, that the Osiris-group, as here depicted, consisting of Seb and Nut, of Isis and Osiris, together with the offspring of the latter pair, ('Horus, the child'), can scarcely have originated in the deification of

purely Egyptian nature. In the present stage of the great mythe, there is no disposition, for example, to identify Osiris with the river Nile. His throne is still exalted high above the heavens: the sun itself is the majestic symbol of his universal sovereignty; from thence he looks resplendent and complacent like the monarch of this sublunary world. He dies indeed, as in the later version of the story, and Isis, sorrowing and indignant, searches for him in the double character of spouse and sister, and on finding him conducts his funeral obsequies. Here also he comes forth resuscitated on the mundane theatre of being, in the person of his royal son and representative, who therefore bears the sacred name Osiris. Yet in all such highly coloured pictures there are wanting not a few of those distinctive touches, which had afterwards, as we shall see, connected the Osirian mythus with the empire of the Pharaohs and localised it more completely in the Valley of the Nile.

The primitive worship of all objects like Osiris may be contemplated under two aspects, differing somewhat from each other, but incapable of any rigorous or formal separation. That worship seems to be in some localities directly *solar*. Fortunes of Osiris have been interwoven or identified with those of the great orb of day. His votaries have an eye exclusively to periodic motions of the sun and the vicissitudes of the seasons; not so much in reference to the increase or the decrease of his luminous functions, as of seeming changes in his fructifying, fertilising power. In winter he appears to the imagination of the worshipper as languishing and dying; and all nature, ceasing to put forth

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*Main ideas
embodied
in Osiris-
worship.*

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her buds and blossoms, is believed to suffer with him: while at other seasons of the year the majesty of this great king of heaven is reasserted in the vivifying of creation and the gladdening of the human heart. There is an annual resurrection of all nature; for the sun-god is himself returning from the under-world,—the region of the dead. Or if we study the same representation in its more *tel-luric* aspect, what is there depicted as a mourning for Osiris is no longer emblematic merely of prostration in the sun-god: it imports more frequently the loss of vital forces in the vegetable kingdom, as the consequence of the solstitial heat. The earth herself becomes the principal sufferer; and the cause of all her passionate and despairing lamentations is the influence that dries up the fountains of her own vitality.

*Parallel in
the Adonis-
worship of
Phœnicia.*

Now which ever be adjudged the primitive form, or the correct interpretation, of this old Osirian mythe, we must remember that, historically speaking, the substance of the mythe itself is not by any means peculiar to the Valley of the Nile. It recurs in nearly all countries bordering on the Mediterranean. It can often be directly traced to Asia, and as often to the agency of those Phœnician colonists, who, scattered thickly in the islands to the west of Syria, were importing to far distant havens, not their amber only but their civilisation and religious knowledge¹. In the mother-country of Phœnicia², the Osirian worship had its ancient

¹ Movers, *Die Religion und die Gottheiten der Phönizier*, pp. 12, sq. Bonn, 1841.

² See especially Lucian, *De Dea Syria*, c. 6 sqq. Among other curious par-

ticulars he informs us that some of the people of Byblus, at the foot of Lebanon, where the mysteries of Adonis were celebrated every year, and into which Lucian was himself

counterpart in mysteries of Adonis¹ and the annual 'weeping for Tammuz,' (Ezek. viii. 14). There, again, the fate of the divinity was rigorously identified with periodic changes in the aspect of external nature. The idea of an Adonis in the prime of life was the most vivid image which the Syrian mind could fashion of all fertilising and benignant powers. At length, however, the divinity sinks down oppressed and overwhelmed; his heart is pierced by some mysterious arrow: he dies, and in the sacred month, 'the month of Tammuz,' when the scorching blasts of summer are well-nigh exhausted, a large crowd of Syrian maids and matrons flock together from all quarters; they bemoan the loss of Tammuz; but their vehement ejaculations are all quickly followed by a series of impure and diabolic orgies: symptoms of returning life in nature are to them a signal for festivity as frantic as their former grief. Vitality is coming back to earth: and in its advent they perceive another 'finding' of their lost Adonis (εὕρεσις Ἀδώνιδος).

Nor is this the only instance of some close affinity between the old mythographers of Egypt

Other proofs of connexion with Phœnicia.

initiated, were of opinion that those ceremonies had been really instituted for *Osiris*, and that he was buried, in their country not in Egypt: cf. Photius, *Biblioth.* cod. 242, p. 343, ed. Bekker. In the hymn to Osiris given above, the translator has conjectured independently of all discussions like the present, that Byblus was 'the region of the tree Ner,' there mentioned (p. 45) as one residence of Osiris. Since the above was written, I find that Brugsch, in his interesting paper *Die Adonisklage*

und das Linoslied (Berlin, 1852), agrees in tracing the Adonis-mythe to Asia (p. 27), and in identifying Adonis and Osiris (p. 31).

¹ *Adonis*, there can be no doubt, is identical with אֲדֹנִי 'my lord:' and also equivalent to *Tammuz*, Ezek. viii. 14, in which passage the Vulg. renders 'ecce ibi mulieres sedebant plangentes *Adonidem*:' see Gesen. *Monum. Phœn.* II. 400. Among the Greeks the close connexion with Aphrodite-worship was still more apparent.

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*The
Cabeiri:*

*an example
of planet-
worship.*

and Phœnicia. Mingling with the other progeny of Ptah, or the Egyptian Vulcan, stand the great Cabeirian brothers', whose repute and worship were extensively diffused in various provinces of the west. The word *Cabeiri* is itself immediately explainable, if we resort to the Semitic languages: for there it means the 'Great' or 'Mighty Ones'; and thus is pointing in the same direction as the ancient dwarf-gods, which were also sacred images of Cabeiri and were venerated with a kindred fervour by the rude Phœnician pilot and the polished priest of Memphis. The Cabeiri seem to have been eight in number; or, excluding *Esmân* ('literally eight'), that one of the fraternity who was regarded as the chief or aggregate expression for the whole, we limit them to seven; which strongly indicates, in the opinion of some writers, an original identity of the Cabeiri with the more conspicuous of the heavenly bodies². In the sacred books of China the 'seven brilliant ones,' deemed worthy of peculiar homage, are the sun, the moon and the five planets; while the planets, when regarded singly, have been made to bear the corresponding title of the 'five heavenly chiefs³.' The Greek had similarly his seven θεοὶ μέγαλοι, and the Persian his 'seven ministers of the highest:' examples, which appear to be

² Herod. II. 51, III. 37, and above, p. 33. Their father was also called *Sadyk* or *Sydyk*, which is possibly akin to צַדִּיק. Movers (as before, p. 652) has very naturally expressed his wonder that any one should have doubted the identity of κάβειροι and כַּבְיִרִים (= θεοὶ μέγαλοι): for this identity was well known to the ancients.

³ Thus Xenocrates, a Carthaginian

writer (quoted by Clemens Alexand. *Cohortat. ad Gentes*, c. v. § 66), declares expressly ἐπὶ τὰ μὲν θεῶν εἶναι τοὺς πλανήτας; and then adds in reference to *Esmân* (the 'eighth' of the Cabeiri, Movers, p. 651) ὅγδοον δὲ τὸν ἐξ αὐτῶν συνεστῶτα κόσμον: cf. Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, lib. I. § 34, who also quotes Xenocrates, to the same general effect.

⁴ See Part III. p. 40 and n. 1.

suggestive of the early spread of planet-worship, if they do not absolutely prove that astronomical principles had entered largely into the construction of all mythic systems,—that of Egypt not excepted¹. CHAP.
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Be this however as it may, there is no longer any doubt that in Phœnicia, more than the adjoining nations, we discover proofs of correspondency and contact with the Egypt of the Pharaohs. In both countries² the foundation of mythology is completely *ditheistic*. The superior gods are ranked in pairs according to the functions of the different sexes: while the votaries of both those systems were familiar with the notion of androgynal, or compound, deities. The Baal of the Old Phœnician found the highest symbol of his vitalising power in the great monarch of the heavenly bodies; and corresponding with this fact, the sun-god, born of chaos and elemental fire, was the most glorious deity of the Old Egyptian. Both had also kept their hold with equal firmness on a mythe in which the changing aspects of the vegetable kingdom were set forth as periodic deaths and resurrections of the highest member of their pantheon. In both countries the ascription of benignant or of other properties to stars and planets, issued first of all in

*General
resemblances between
the religions
of Egypt
and Phœnicia.*

¹ Uhlemann (*Aegypt. Alter.* II. 162 sq. *Thoth*, pp. 33 sq) is a strong supporter of the 'astronomical principle' as applied to the unriddling of Egyptian mythology: but now and then his arguments appear to me unconvincing. He finds an astronomical reason for fixing the number of the primary gods at eight and of the secondary gods at

twelve. Mr Kenrick, (i. 367, 368), with less desire of systematising, concedes the general truth of this theory, but adds that 'it is not likely that the whole system originated in any one principle.'

² On this characteristic of the Phœnician theology, see Part I. pp. 90 sq.

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the idea of some inflexible Fate, some necessary Order, and then was culminating in the theory of a *magnus annus*, at the close of which, it was expected that the whole creation would be reabsorbed, or would revert at least to its original elements.

*Common
origin of
those re-
ligions.*

These points of contact are indeed so many and so obvious, that explorers, setting out with different objects and as different preconceptions, can hardly fail to meet together in the same conclusion,—a belief that the mythologies of Egypt and Phœnicia were pervaded by the same ideas and radiated from a common centre. Which of them was actually the older system; what had been the links of intercourse by which the two were held together, we are still unable to affirm with absolute certainty or precision. If, for instance, the historical character of the ‘Old Monarchy’ of Egypt have been fully vindicated by recent explorations, it will follow of necessity that interchanges of religious thought were long anterior¹ to the earliest inroads of the Hyk-sos or Phœnician shepherds; and the meeting-place will consequently have to be determined by following two great lines of civilisation farther backward, to that cradle of all art and language, of all science, letters and mythology,—‘the primitive land of Aram and the primitive empire in Babel².’

*Animal-
worship of
Egypt.*

But before I pass to a minute consideration of the latest phase assumed in Egypt by the mythe of Isis and Osiris, or in other words the fullest

¹ Movers, as before, p. 41, is in favour of this hypothesis, considering that the solar and stellar worship was engrafted by the influence of

the Hyk-sos on the old animal-worship of the Egyptians.

² Bunsen, *Egypt's Place*, I. 444.

evolution of the national belief in what may fairly be entitled the historic period, it is most important CHAP.
I. to recal attention to the creed of other and still earlier settlers in the Nile-valley. When the secondary race of colonists from Asia found their way to Egypt, they encountered there a form of superstition so thoroughly rooted in the heart of the people, that in spite of the political and social changes which passed over them, it always held its ground and went on flourishing until the overthrow of paganism in Egypt. I am adverting to the *animal-worship* of that country; which deserves to be regarded as at once the most repulsive and most universal of its manifold superstitions. We must not suppose indeed that this idolatrous devotion to brute animals had always been unknown in other countries. Traces of it are detected in the primitive paganism of the Hellenic and Germanic tribes: it *its parallels in other regions.* seems to have prevailed in every district of America¹, where gods and other spirits were believed on some occasions to 'possess' not only all varieties of living creatures, but the very plants and stones; it had existed, and exists at present, in all negro races, and indeed wherever man continues to be awed by a belief that the divinity he worships is impersonal Power, diffused throughout the universe, and manifested in all possible types of creaturely existence.

Yet in Egypt this zoolatry appears in such exaggerated shapes and with such monstrous adjuncts, that to trace at length the stages of its progress and the secret of its perpetuity would fill a *Why so startling and extraordinary in Egypt.*

¹ See for instance, Müller's *Amerik. Urrelig.* pp. 60 sq. 256 sq. 420.

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most remarkable chapter in the history of civilisation. The contemptuous exclamations of the later Greeks and Romans, on witnessing the coexistence of abstruse philosophy and artistic beauty with the worship of brute creatures, are familiar to all persons interested in this study. An admirer and apologist of the Egyptian creed was fully conscious of the reasons which had given birth to such opprobrious criticisms; for he confesses plainly that the multitude did not stop short at merely relative worship, but adored the animals themselves¹ (αὐτὰ τὰ ζῶα). I must not, however, leave unquoted the remarkable passage of Clement of Alexandria, with reference to this question, because it shews as well the sanctity with which the animals were all invested by Egyptians, as the feelings which zoolatry was then exciting in the minds of most spectators whether Christian or heathen. After dwelling on the costliness and splendour of Egyptian temples and directing our attention to the veil inwrought with gold by which the adytum was curtained off from the rest of the building, he continues²: 'But if you pass beyond into the remotest part of the inclosure, hastening to behold something more worthy of your search, and seek for the image which dwells in the temple, a *pastophorus* [shrine-bearer], or some one else of those who minister in sacred things, with a grave air singing a Pæan in the Egyptian tongue, draws aside a small portion of the veil, as if about to show us the god; and makes us burst

¹ Plutarch, *De Is. et Osir.* c. LXXI. As contrasted with the Egyptian notions he considered the Greeks entirely orthodox (λήγουσιν ὁρθῶς) in

their dedication of particular birds and reptiles to particular divinities.

² *Pædagog.* lib. III. c. 2: cf. *Juven.* xv. 7.

into a loud laugh. For the god you sought is not there, but a cat, or a crocodile, or a serpent sprung from the soil, or some such brute animal, which is more suited to a cave than a temple. The Egyptian deity appears,—a beast rolling himself on a purple coverlet!’

We might deduce the very high antiquity of this practice from the fact that many of the animals so worshipped had been always sacred only in particular nomes¹; and though the final consolidation of the monarchy and the comparative fusion of religious tenets which resulted from it, had secured a universal reverence for the ox, the dog, the cat, the hawk, the ibis and two kinds of fish, there was no period when, with these exceptions, sacred animals of one nome were not treated as a common article of food in others, and not liable, on every outburst of fanaticism, to be assailed with open violence or contempt².

Conspicuous at the head of the zoolatry of Egypt stands the worship of the great Memphitic bull, Apis (Hapi)³, which is carried back, in its more elementary condition, as far as the ‘2nd dynasty⁴.’ In the reign of Ramses II., the great bull is made to bear the title ‘second life of Ptah⁵,’

¹ Cf. above, p. 21, n. 2.

² On the various theories respecting the rationale of this kind of worship, see Kenrick, II. 2 sq., Uhlemann, *Aegypt. Alt.* III. 210 sq.

³ According to Uhlemann (p. 208), the Coptic *hap* means ‘the judge [or rather, ‘judgment’];’ perhaps with reference to the functions of Osiris in the under-world. Of three other bulls admitted to the foremost rank of animal-worship one was

Mnevis of Heliopolis, who bore the title ‘the resuscitated sun.’ The worship both of Apis and Mnevis extended far beyond the cities where they were especially honoured.

⁴ Osburn, *Mon. Hist.* I. 247.

⁵ *Revue des Deux Mondes*, as before, p. 1074. On the alleged preternaturalness of the birth of Apis, through the agency of a generic beam of light, see Herod. III. 28, and Mr Blakesley’s note.

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—a fact which intimates that he was then regarded as the living shrine, or incarnation, of the chief god of Memphis, and a similar exaltation is suggested in the title ‘image of the soul of Osiris¹,’ which has elsewhere been awarded to him. Viewed in this light Apis was to the Egyptian worshipper a present or incarnate deity. The luxuries deemed appropriate to the highest earthly monarch were all lavished on his service. He was fed with a religious scrupulosity. He was anointed with the choicest unguents. Mates of spotless beauty were provided for him². At death he was embalmed and swathed: his funeral was performed with a magnificence unrivalled in the case of men: a sumptuous monument which still attracts the admiration of all artists was erected in his honour. And since mortals after death were thought to be in some mysterious way united with Osiris, the dead Apis also was entitled for this cause *Osiris-Apis* (Ὅσιρ-ῶπις), or *Serapis*³; and as such was worshipped with supreme devotion in the interval which elapsed before the birth or ‘manifestation’ of a new calf,—the vehicle to which the soul of the departed Apis was believed to be immediately transferred.

Serapis.

¹ Plut. *De Is. et Osir.* c. xx.

² Wilkinson and others have denied that still worse abominations were connected with the animal-worship of the Egyptians (see Diod. i. 85; Herod. ii. 46); but allusions like that in Lev. xviii. 23 agree too closely with the statements of the Greek historians: cf. Döllinger, pp. 226, 227.

³ That this is the true account of Serapis has been lately proved by M. Mariette, *Mémoire sur le Séra-*

péum, to whose labours Lepsius was looking hopefully when he wrote his own Appendix on ‘Serapis’ in the *Götterkreis* &c. p. 213. Respecting the Greek version of the fetching of the god Serapis from Sinope by order of Ptolemy Soter, and the consequence of identifying Serapis with the Greek Dionysus, see Bunsen, *Egypt’s Place*, i. 431, and Maury, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, as before, p. 1073.

While animal-worship had been thus amalgamated more and more with adoration of the elements and of spirits ruling in the heavenly bodies, the important change to which I have before alluded had been also passing over the complexion of the mythe which centred in the greatest pair of national divinities. There might indeed be no express intention either on the part of priest or people to relinquish the conclusions of the old mythology. In Osiris they might recognise, as heretofore, the ultimate source of all vitality, and as such might find the highest and most adequate symbol of his functions in the great orb of day. They might continue also to associate Isis with him as the counterpart of his productive powers, and discerning an appropriate emblem of that goddess in the moon or in the earth, might still, in words, attribute all the higher phenomena of life to the harmonious action of these two divinities. But such is far from being a true account of the religion of the many, or the popular theology¹ of Egypt, in the later Pharaonic period. Owing to a general want of fixity in men's religious tenets, the ingredients of the mythe had been so altered, its area so contracted, its connexion with the world at large so broken and obscured as to have rendered it an almost novel version of the primitive story. The Egyptian mind is seen descending more and more entirely from the worship of the heavenly bodies to the contemplation of the marvellous

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I.

*Egyptian
mythology
more local-
ised, in con-
nexion with
the Nile.*

¹ Thus Plutarch (*De Is. et Osir.* c. XXXIII) carefully distinguishes between the people and the more enlightened of the priests: Οἱ δὲ σοφώτεροι τῶν ιερέων, οὐ μόνον τὸν Νεῖλον

Ὅσιριν καλοῦσιν . . . ἀλλὰ Ὅσιριν μὲν ἀπλῶς ἀπασαν τὴν ὑγροποιὸν ἀρχὴν καὶ δύναμιν, αἰτίαν γενέσεως καὶ σπέρματος οὐσίαν νομίζοντες.

CHAP. agencies at work in its immediate neighbourhood.

I.

In earlier times Osiris was enthroned upon the sun; but now the Nile itself is substituted for that glorious luminary. Then the spouse of the great sun-god was the mother and the nurse of universal vegetation; now she is the single land of Egypt fructified and gladdened by the Nile. Then Osiris was a nature-god, a verbal representative of forces active in the varied processes of nature: now he has been moulded into the great civilising hero of Mizraim, binding men together in a fixed society, teaching agriculture, and subduing nations not by force alone but by the charms of eloquence and music. Then his death was the suspension of all vital power without the least distinction of locality; now it coincides precisely with that season of the year in Egypt when decay and barrenness are everywhere ascendant through the Valley of the Nile.

*Reason of
these modi-
fications.*

The reason of this gradual localising of the story,—this confusion, one might call it, of the sun with the Egyptian river—is hardly to be sought in the prevailing fancy that the Nile and sun were wont to meet together at the western horizon, and after plunging down into the under-world came forth again together from the caverns of the east¹. An explanation, simple in itself and serving also to account for other kindred stories, is suggested by the fact that the Egyptian had been gradually tempted to associate every genial, fertilising power in nature with the annual overflow of his great river. In one meaning of the phrase Herodotus

¹ Osburn, I. 420.

was right, when he declared that Egypt is 'the gift of the Nile'. 'My river is mine own' was the ungodly boast ascribed to Egypt in the vision of the Hebrew prophet (Ezek. xxix. 3, 9,) 'my river is mine own, and I have made it for myself.' 'Turn the course of the Nile,' it has been said, 'and not one blade of vegetation would ever arise in Egypt.' And the more intelligent of modern travellers, no longer open to the potent witcheries which nature once exerted on mankind, but recognising the almighty hand of God Himself throughout this 'annual miracle of mercy,' are still awe-struck by the grand phenomena presented to them as the river bursts afresh into its ancient channels. 'All nature shouts for joy. The men, the children, the buffaloes, gambol in its refreshing waters; the broad waves sparkle with shoals of fish, and fowl of every wing flutter over them in clouds. Nor is this jubilee of nature confined to the higher orders of creation. The moment the sand becomes moistened by the approach of the fertilising waters, it is literally alive with insects innumerable¹.'

Nor are these the only changes introduced into the primitive mythe of Isis and Osiris. Though the mother of both is still Rhea (Nut or Nutpe), doubts have been suggested touching the true name of their father; while the chief progenitors of the gods are now distinctly represented as giving birth to a second pair, which rank in some respects upon a level with the former. Set, or Typhon, is the brother of Osiris²; and, accompanied by his spouse

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I.

Other members introduced into the Osiris-group.

¹ II. 5.

² Osburn, I. 13.

³ Preternaturally born, however. Plutarch says (c. XII); μή καιρῶ,

μηδὲ κατὰ χώραν, ἀλλ' ἀναβρῆξαντα πλῆγῃ διὰ τῆς πλευρᾶς ἐξαλέσθαι: cf. Part III. p. 57, n. 2.

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I.

and sister Nephthys, he is placed in a position of direct antagonism to the benevolent divinities, to Isis and Osiris, and especially to the younger Horus, their child and champion; while a definite character has also been attributed to Thoth¹, the ibis-headed Hermes of Egyptian worship, the inventor of letters, the depository of primeval wisdom, 'the president of the reasoning faculty,' the teacher, counsellor, and secretary of Osiris himself.

*Particular
inquiry
respecting
Set or Ty-
phon.*

The greatest of the difficulties experienced as we analyse these fresh developments of the Egyptian mythology is connected with the origin and import of the evil-minded Typhon. Some of the chief names by which he was at first distinguished are *Set*, *Seti*, *Sutech*; but in the course of modern explorations, it has come to light that he was also identified² at least on one inscription with the great

¹ The place of this ibis-headed god, 'lord of Shmun' (Hermopolis), appears to be in what is called the secondary series of Egyptian divinities. Bunsen styles him (i. 393) the 'most important of all the Cabeiri' (corresponding to *Emdan*, above, (p. 52). As connected with the Osiris-group he is sometimes entitled 'begotten of Osiris' himself; but the relation indicated in the text is that which he sustains far more frequently. Mr Kenrick observes of Thoth (*Anc. Egypt.* i. 428), that 'with a name nearly similar, *Taut*, he appears also in the Phœnician history, and in the same character of the inventor of letters.'

² See Lepsius, *Götterkreis* (as before), p. 206, who adds: 'Dieser Begriff des *Set* oder *Sutech* als des *ausserägyptischen* Gottes dürfte überhaupt den Schlüssel zu der räthselhaften Natur desselben und seiner

zu verschiedenen Zeiten verschiedenen Auffassung darbieten.' This inquiry has since been ably followed out in the *Revue Archéologique*, xii^e année, pp. 257 sq. The original connexion between Baal and Typhon may, I think be also traceable in the compound Baal-Zephon (𐤁𐤏𐤍𐤕) of Exod. xiv. 2, 9, Numb. xxxiii. 7; which may again have been identical with the *Αδαρις* or *Αβαρις* of Manetho and Josephus; for this border-city of the Hyk-sos, identified by Lepsius with Pelusium (? *Pelishtim*, city of the Philistines), is described by them as πόλις κατὰ τὴν θεολογίαν ἄνωθεν Τυφώνιος. There is, however, some difficulty in ascertaining the original relation of Typhon to the hideous monsters of the primitive world, whom Greek writers, from Homer downwards, designated Τυφῶν, Τυφῶνις, Τυφῶς.

Phœnician Bel or Baal: and in confirmation of this interesting fact we are enabled to establish CHAP.
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 that when the Hyk-sos made their grand descent on Egypt, they had recognised in Typhon their own national divinity, had chosen him for their sole leader, and had fought and conquered always under his immediate patronage¹. With their ascendancy in Egypt, Typhon also had become supreme.

It is quite possible, indeed, that in far earlier times² he held a high position in some districts as the elemental god who struggled periodically with the elder Horus, in the conflict ever waged by different atmospheric agencies, as light and darkness, rain and drought, production and decomposition³. Studied under this peculiar aspect, Typhon may have seemed to the Egyptian of the older period a terrific but not always a malevolent divinity; just as Nephthys, 'mistress of the house,' and female counterpart of Typhon, was at first almost identical with Isis, and to some extent associated with kindly and maternal properties. But after the expulsion of the hated Hyk-sos, Typhon was no longer tolerated in a single canton of the Nile-valley: his name was chiselled out of all the monuments⁴, where it had previously been ranked with those of kings and of superior gods: and in the future period of Egyptian history, Typhon was the synonym for 'evil genius'; he became the great personification of corrupting and disorganising

*Gradual
modification
of his
character.*

¹ Brugsch, quoted by Döllinger, pp. 421, 422.

² Lepsius, p. 204, Bunsen, I. 426.

³ *Revue Archéol.* as before.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 267, 268: cf. above, p. 42, n. 1, for a similar attempt to suppress Ammon-worship.

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CHAP.
I.

forces, the author of disease, of impotence, of death itself. His symbol was a human form, surmounted by the head of some fabulous animal; while the brutes especially 'possessed' by him were those which the Egyptian either feared or hated, as the incarnations of stupidity, of malice, or of violence—the ass, the crocodile, the hippopotamus and the bear.

Explanation of the ultimate form assumed by him.

I think, however, that the latest form assumed by this Typhonic mythe admits of easy explanation, as soon as we have learned to see distinctly imaged forth in it the main peculiarities of Egyptian nature. While Osiris was the fertilising river, the fruitful land of Egypt was his spouse. But Typhon his malignant brother, born like him of Rhea, was the enemy of Egypt, and as such allied with its mischances whether physical or political¹. At one time he is nothing but the sea, which swallows up the waters of the Nile and circumscribes the empire of the Pharaohs; but more commonly the Typhon whom they dreaded was the glowing, scorching, and mephitic blast, the south-wind from the desert. For this reason Nephthys, who had once been merely a personification of the world unseen, as Isis of the visible hemisphere, is now transmuted into the desert itself, the birth-place of all joylessness and utter destitution; thus completing the dark series of antagonisms which parted Egypt from surrounding nations, and which formed the very essence of the popular theology.

¹ In this connexion it is worth remarking that Typhon when expelled from Egypt was believed to have fled on the back of an ass for

seven days, *καὶ σωθέρα γενῆσαι παῖδας Ἰεροσόλυμον καὶ Ἰουδαῖον* (Plutarch, *De Is. et Osir.* c. xxxi): cf. Lepsius, as before, p. 210.

The reader will be now in a position to appreciate the full-blown story of Osiris, which I give with some occasional condensation in the words of Plutarch's treatise¹; written, it should be remembered, to the chief of the Thyades at Delphi, who herself had been initiated by her parents into the Egyptian mysteries:

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I.

*Latest form
of the
Osiris-
mythe.*

"Rhea [Nut] having secretly united herself with Cronos [Seb], the Sun, who was indignant, laid upon her a curse, that she should not bring forth in any year or month. Hermes [Thoth], however, who was also a lover of Rhea, playing at dice with the moon, took away the seventieth² part of each period of daylight, and from these made five new days, which are the *ἐπαγόμεναι*, or intercalary days. On each of these five days Rhea bore a child. On the first was born Osiris, the son of the Sun, at whose birth a voice was heard proclaiming that the Lord of all was coming to light: or, according to another version, a certain Pamylen drawing water, at Thebes, heard a voice from the temple of Jupiter, which charged him to proclaim that a great and beneficent king Osiris was born. On this account Pamylen was intrusted by Cronos with the nursing of Osiris, and hence the festival of the Pamylenia, and a kind of *phallegoria* [as in the Bacchic orgies]. On the second day was born Arueris, son of the Sun, whom they call Apollo and the Elder Horus. On the third was born Typhon, not in the usual course, but bursting out with a sudden stroke from the side of Rhea. On the fourth day was born Isis³; on the fifth Nephthys, who was called Teleute and Aphrodite⁴, and according to some, Nike. Osiris and Arueris were sprung from the Sun, but Iris from Hermes, and Typhon and Nephthys from Cronos..... This last pair were married to each other. Isis and Osiris united themselves even before their birth, and their son was called,

¹ *De Iside et Osiride*, c. XII.—c. XIX.

² A round number for 72, the fifth part of 360: cf. LXX as applied to the Seventy-Two translators of the Hebrew Bible.

³ The text of Plutarch adds *ἐν*

πανάγυρος ('in very damp places'); but the reading is doubtful.

⁴ This title brings Nephthys into parallelism with Astarte, the female counterpart of Baal, and the Aphrodite of Semitic tribes: see Part I. p. 93.

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CHAP. according to some¹, Arueris, the Elder Horus, and the Apollo
I. of the Greeks.

"Osiris being king at once proceeded to civilise the Egyptians; he taught them agriculture; he enacted laws for them; he taught them to worship the gods, and afterwards traversed the world on the same civilising errand, subduing the nations not by force but by persuasion, and especially the charms of music and poetry: on which account the Greeks concluded that he was identical with Dionysus². In his absence Isis administered the regency so wisely, that Typhon was unable to create any disturbance; but on his return he conspired against Osiris with seventy-two men and the Ethiopian queen Aso³; and having secretly obtained the measure of Osiris, caused a coffer splendidly adorned to be brought into the banqueting-room, promising to give it to the guest whom it should fit. Osiris put himself into it to make the trial; and Typhon and his associates immediately pegged and soldered down the case, and set it afloat on the river. It floated into the sea through the Tanitic mouth, which on that account Egyptians of later days regarded with abhorrence. These things were done on the seventeenth of the month Athyr, in which the Sun enters Scorpion⁴, and in the twenty-eighth year of the reign, or as some said of the age, of Osiris. The Pans and Satyrs who lived about Chemmis hearing of this tragedy and being agitated by

¹ The common story was, however, that the child of Isis and Osiris was the Younger Horus, or else Harpocrates.

² The conception of Osiris has probably an historical basis in the conquests ascribed to Sesostriis; just as the Mexican mythe of Quetzalcoatl (Part III. pp. 149 sq.) had embodied the traditions of the populace respecting the labours of some true philanthropist. In Diodor. I. 19, it is affirmed that the civilising expeditions of Osiris extended *ἕως Ἑνδῶν καὶ τοῦ πέρας τῆς οἰκουμένης*: and it is further worthy of remark as intimating a certain affinity between the mythe of Osiris and the history of Sesostriis, that the

latter on his return from his foreign conquests narrowly escaped death by fire at the hands of his brother. (Herod. II. 107).

³ 'The co-operation of a queen of Ethiopia in the plot against his life is significant of the national hostility of that people against the Egyptians, and the prevalence of female domination:' Kenrick, I. 413.

⁴ The 17th of Athyr would correspond with the middle of November (1st Athyr = Oct. 28); and therefore the disappearance of Osiris took place in autumn, just before the sowing-season of the Egyptians, and at the time when darkness was proceeding on its triumph through the months of winter.

it, sudden terrors of the multitude acquired the name of *panics*; while Isis cut off one lock of her hair and put on mourning, at the place where she first heard the news, which accordingly obtained the name *Coptos*¹.....Wandering to and fro disconsolate she finally met with some children who told her whither the coffin had floated, and hence the Egyptians deem the words of children to carry with them a prophetic power.....She also learned that Osiris had inadvertently united himself with her sister Nephthys.....and went in search of the child which had been put away as soon as it was born through fear of Typhon. This she found after great trouble by the guidance of a dog, who afterwards became her champion and attendant, with the name Anubis.....

"She now ascertained that the chest had been floated as far as Byblus [in Phœnicia] and cast ashore, and that the plant *erica* had grown up about it and entirely enclosed it in the trunk, so that the king of the country, amazed at the vast proportions of the tree, gave orders for it to be cut down, and made of it a pillar² to support the roof of his palace. Isis guided, as they say, by a divine monitor came to Byblus³, and sitting down at a well, wretched and in tears, was there accosted by the queen's maidens, and on giving proofs of supernatural virtue, was entrusted with the nursing of the infant prince. She fed this child by giving it her finger to suck: she likewise put him every night into the fire to consume those portions of him which were mortal, and transforming herself into a swallow, hovered round the pillar and bemoaned her widowhood. At length, on making herself known, she was allowed to carry off the pillar, and taking out the enclosed sarcophagus of Osiris, she set sail for Egypt. Arriving at a desert place she opened the coffin and embraced the corpse of her husband with bitter tears.....She brought it now to Egypt, and while going on a

¹ The modern *Keft*, the principal city of the nome Coptites in the Upper Thebaid. It is noticeable that the same Greek word *κόρρεσθαι* 'to lament for the dead,' was of such ill omen in the mind of a Greek, that Herodotus (II. 132, 171), shrank from naming Osiris, a deity analogous to the Apollo of his own

traditions and a deity of the upper regions, in connexion with it or with a ceremony that indicated woe.

² Here again, as Mr Kenrick observes (I. 413) we have an historical allusion, *viz.* to the use of Osiride pillars in Egyptian architecture.

³ On the mythological affinities here implied, see above, p. 50, n. 2.

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visit to her son Horus, who was being nursed at Buto, she deposited the corpse in secrecy. But Typhon, hunting by moonlight, happened to meet with it and recognising the body of Osiris, he divided it into fourteen pieces, which he scattered about the country¹. Isis, on learning this set out in quest of the remains, sailing over the marshy districts in a *baris*, made of papyrus, and as soon as she found one of the members she buried it there. All were ultimately recovered but one (*τὸ αἰδοῖον*); for it had been thrown into the river and devoured by the fishes, *lepidotus*, *phagrus* and *oxyrhynchus*; which were afterwards held in abomination. In the room of it, she made an emblem, to which the Egyptians still pay honour (in the *φαλληφόρια*²). Osiris afterwards came back from the underworld, and, Horus, aided by the presence of his father, carried out the plan for vanquishing Typhon, and after a fight of many days took him prisoner. Isis, however, loosed his fetters and let him go; at which Horus was so enraged that he tore off his mother's diadem; but Hermes [Thoth] supplied its place by a helmet in the shape of a cow's head.....In two more battles Typhon was completely mastered. Harpocrates, being sprung from the union of Isis and Osiris after the death of the latter, his birth was untimely and he had a weakness in his lower limbs³."

*Ethical
aspects of
the religion
of Egypt.*

We should form however an imperfect judgment of the Old Egyptian theory of religion, if we failed to contemplate it also from a different point

¹ This story of the dissection of the body was meant to explain the circumstance 'that the honour of his interment was claimed by so many different places.' (Kenrick, I. 413.)

² In this feature of the mythe we easily discover the same desire to give a quasi-historical account of an existing usage. Phallic emblems are very common in the earlier mythology of Egypt, as in the later Siva-worship of Hindustan: the object being in both cases to symbolise the generative and reproductive power

of nature. This tendency in Egypt was perhaps most fully manifested in *Khem* (the Pan of Herodotus, II. 46), who became a kind of Priapeian Osiris.

³ Plutarch's observation at the end of the mythe implies that a kind of reverence for the great Egyptian divinities induced him to suppress other particulars still more revolting: *Ταῦτα σχεδὸν ἐστὶ τοῦ μύθου τὰ κεφάλαια τῶν δυσφημοτάτων ἐξαιρεθέντων· οὐδὲν ἐστὶ τὸ περὶ τὸν Ὀρου διαμελισμὸν καὶ τὸν Ἴσιδος ἀποκεφαλισμόν.* (c. XX.)

of view. As hitherto regarded, the chief god Osiris was either confounded with the elemental processes of nature, or, according to the best appreciation of him, was engaged in regulating natural agencies for the peculiar benefit of the land of Egypt. But existing side by side with this conception of Osiris was another, more exalted and more ethical; implying in its turn a larger measure of religious sensibility. The foremost member of the pantheon was to many of the Egyptians a personification of the good principle. As such, in his own person, or by means of the invincible spear of Horus, he had pierced and crushed the serpent Apap¹. He was worshipped, therefore, as the friend of right, the enemy and vanquisher of wrong, the author of the blessings which now circulate among the living, and the judge and sovereign of the dead. Osiris was the 'sun-god' in the very loftiest meaning of such phraseology. Exalted far above this sublunary sphere, his piercing vision, as he rode majestic through the heavens, had made him cognisant of human actions; and returning to the under-world in which he was believed to join his mother, and to reign supreme, the Pluto of Mizraim, with no further dread² of the malignant breath of Typhon,

*Osiris, as
moral go-
vernor.*

¹ See *Revue Archéol.* xiv^e année, p. 194; Kenrick, I. 421. The letting loose of Typhon by the woman, Isis (Plutarch. c. xix. where also it is noticeable that an *ὄφις* appears), might not unnaturally be construed as giving free scope to the powers of evil, and might so have a remote relation to the sacred narrative of the Fall. Movers (pp. 522 sq.) distinctly connects the Typhon both of Phœnicia and Egypt

with the Hebrew 'נִינְפִיץ, 'a basilisk,' or 'viper,' e.g. Is. xi. 8; lix. 5; Jerem. viii. 17: and although in the Egyptian mythology the ill effects produced by Typhon were mainly viewed as *physical*, there was certainly no absolute limitation to that class of evils, (cf. Plutarch, c. I.)

² 'In dem Tottenkulte trat Set erklärlicher Weise mehr zurück. Daher fehlt er in den Götterlisten

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CHAP. I. he presided over a judicial process which should
fix the lot of all Egyptians in the world beyond
the grave.

It is desirable to consider this more ethical aspect of the creed of Egypt in two separate divisions, as affecting human conduct, (1) in the present, and (2) in the future life-time of each individual member.

*Religious
tempera-
ment of the
Old Egypt-
ian.*

I. Now it is certain that in spite of the monstrosity pervading the whole structure of his mythological system, the Egyptian, as compared with some of his more western neighbours, was preeminently religious. He had ever borne the yoke of a most irksome superstition with alacrity befitting a far worthier cause. The time, the zeal, the treasure he would lavish on the building of his multitudinous temples, or the sustentation and the sepulture of sacred animals, was constant proof of his intense devotion to the service of his gods; nay, rather than devour or damage one such animal he was content to suffer all the worst extremities of destitution or disgrace. He seemed again to be continually oppressed by a conviction that divine or supernatural powers were every where diffused around him. Nothing is more clearly traceable on papyri which accompany the mummies of the Old Egyptian than his firm belief in the reality of the world invisible,—belief which generating awe and dread became in him the ruling sentiment that hourly cast its shadow on his pathway and that haunted him at every turn¹. The

der Königsgräber; im Reiche des
unteren Osiris hatte er keine Macht.'
Lepsius, *Götterkreis*, &c. p. 207.

¹ Osburn, *Mon. Hist.* I. 411. Herodotus (II. 37) begins his description of the ritual observances with

warmth of his religious feelings was betrayed, and may have also been augmented and embittered, by diversities of worship in the different nomes and by collisions more or less fanatic¹, which arose from such diversities. It has been urged indeed that the Egyptian was not always of a temper so morose and gloomy as some writers had formerly imputed to him; and perhaps there is sufficient ground for this correction; but in reference to the dominant genius of the popular religion, nothing in the ancient world can be regarded as more sombre and dejected. The one national air of Egypt was the Maneros²;—a threnody upon the death of Osiris. While the tourist could remark that the Hellenic gods were fond of gaiety and dances, those of Egypt were most gratified by demonstrations of an opposite kind, by dirges and a flood of tears. At banquets even it was not unusual to send round a small model of a mummy, to remind the guest

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I.

the statement: Θεοσεβέες δὲ περισσῶς ἐόντες μάλιστα πάντων ἀνθρώπων: cf. Döllinger (p. 406), who affirms 'Ihre religiösen Gefühle waren wärmer, zäher zugleich und leidenschaftlicher als die der Griechen und Römer.' On this question as to the general temperament of the Egyptians, it is curious to observe that modern writers differ from each other *toto calo*. Thus, the author of the article *Aegyptus* in Smith's *Dictionary* considers the old Egyptians a serious people, of a gloomy, meditative genius: and finds in this circumstance an explanation of the fact that the whole of Egypt, after the introduction of the Gospel, was dotted over with convents which gave birth to the wildest Lives of

Saints. Whereas Sir J. G. Wilkinson in his last work (*Ancient Egyptians*, pp. 7 sq. p. 13) affirms the very contrary: 'They were the reverse of a serious people; and while their philosophers gave their attention to grave abstruse studies, the rest of the community appreciated a merry life, and were remarkable for a love of excitement, quite consistent with the scenes of buffoonery and the talent for caricature so often displayed in the paintings.'

¹ Kenrick, II. 26.

² Explained by Brugsch (*Die Adonisklage*, p. 24) as = *mād-ne-hra*, 'come to the house,' 'come home again,'—the passionate cry of the 'sister,' 'spouse' and 'mother' of Osiris.

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CHAP. in his more joyous moments that his tenure of the
I. present life was fleeting and precarious¹.

*Ignorance
and abject
supersti-
tions of the
many.*

Whether this peculiar state of feeling was a product of peculiar ignorance on sacred subjects we may still be unable to determine with absolute precision; but there seems good reason for concluding that in no country of the ancient world, with the exception of India², were the chasms so numerous and so wide between the different orders of society. Egypt was the land of esoteric dogmas and exclusive institutions. Egypt was the home and nursery of that spirit of eclecticism which had promoted the formation of the early Gnostic sects; and Egypt was accordingly a stronghold of the stoutest opposition which was offered to the primitive heralds of the Gospel by the cold and haughty advocates of human inequality. The natural consequence had been that in no country were the masses kept in greater darkness or more intellectually degraded³. Much as Plutarch wished to prove that the original aim of their mythology was high and elevating⁴, he was driven to acknowledge the failure of the system when his eye was fixed on some of its more popular developments. 'The Egyptians,' he wrote⁵, 'at least, the greater part of them, by adoring the animals themselves, and caring for them as for gods, have crammed

¹ See other examples collected in Döllinger p. 444.

² See Part II. pp. 39 sq.

³ Wilkinson, who may be fairly reckoned among the numerous apologists of Egyptian heathenism, avows, notwithstanding, that 'the people were left in utter ignorance of the fundamental doctrines of their

religion,' (2nd ser. I. 164); and that 'every one was not only permitted, but encouraged, to believe the real sanctity of the idol, and the actual existence of the god whose figure he beheld,' (p. 175.)

⁴ *De Isid. et Osir.* c. VIII.

⁵ *Ibid.* c. LXXI.

their ritual full with subjects of laughter and opprobrium. Nor is this the least evil which results from their stupidity. A dangerous notion is implanted, which drives the weak and simple-minded into the worst forms of superstition, and the shrewder and more daring into atheism and beast-like speculations.'

CHAP.
I.

So exclusively was any higher knowledge which they might possess confined to one special order, that the Pharaoh, as we saw already, was esteemed but little more than a divine administrator of the kingdom in the service of the other priests¹. He ruled as the chief member of the sacerdotal college; while to them had been committed not a few of the most onerous functions of the state. They were the legislators, and the judges, as well as the physicians, the astronomers, the architects and the instructors of the youth; and only through their instrumentality as organs of the gods, or as exponents of the will of holy animals, could secrets be extracted from the world invisible, or answers be returned to the inquiries of the doubting and desponding.

*Power and
privileges
of the sacer-
dotal order.*

We are no longer, it is true, at liberty to urge, like many of our predecessors, that Egyptians were all rigorously distributed into a series of hereditary classes², corresponding to the permanent castes of India after she had been completely Bráhmañised. No *absolute* division of this kind

*Existence of
a regular
cultus.*

¹ Cf. Uhlemann, *Thoth*, p. 11.

² Wilkinson has abandoned his former views on this subject (see *Ancient Egyptians*, p. 129), chiefly, it would seem, in consequence of M. Ampère's paper in the *Revue Archéologique*, v^e année, pp. 405 sq.

where the monuments are shewn to indicate that there was no invariable custom nor any rigorous law, prescribing that the religious, military, or civil functions should in Egypt always be assumed as the result of family-inheritance.

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CHAP.
I.

Priesthood.

Temples.

Festivals.

appears to have been taught in reference even to the present life; while in the future it was held that all, on passing to the grand tribunal of Osiris, would be placed in a position of complete equality. The fact, however, still remains indisputable that class-distinctions did exist with more than usual tenacity, and that the power of the Egyptian priest had always been enormous. There was no period in the history of Egypt, as inscribed upon her monumental records, when such priesthood was not duly organised¹, and when the hopes and fears of the remaining classes were not vitally connected with its absolute ascendancy. The system thus compacted and administered was full of gorgeous and punctilious rites; the temples, glittering with a vast profusion of gold and foreign marbles and distributed into holy and more holy places (as the *πρόναος*, the *σηκός* and the *ἄδυτον*), were thickly planted² in all cantons of the Nile-valley; festivals³,

¹ See Uhlemann, *Aegypt. Alt.* II. 182 sq.; *Thoth*, pp. 89 sq.

² *Ibid.* II. 188 sq., where attention is drawn to some resemblances between the arrangements of Egyptian temples and the Hebrew tabernacle: but see Bähr, *Symbolik*, I. 218. The magnificence of the Egyptian temples is explained at once by the enormous gifts and revenues conferred upon them by some of the more powerful monarchs. Thus the *Annals of Thothmes III.* (of the 18th dynasty) translated by Mr Birch, in the *Archæologia* (1853), Vol. xxxv. pp. 116 sq., are full of instances in which the bounty of the prince was lavished on the great temple of Ammon-Ra, at Thebes, as the result of aid afforded to him by his tutelar deity during a successful attack on certain places in Palestine. 'Slaves,

probably negroes, to open the doors; three fortresses of the Ruten [the Canaanitish enemy],—just as the Lake Moeris and the town of Anthylla supplied the pin-money of the queens of Egypt; linen of various sorts, gold, silver, lapis lazuli, copper, brass, iron, lead, colours for the monuments, bread, loaves of various kinds of food, cattle, geese, gazelles of different kinds, incense, wine, frankincense, offerings to the statues, to the obelisks; fields, meadows, and ponds, stocked with cattle, waterfowl, and pigeons, complete the long list of donations,' (p. 154). Many of these provisions went for the daily banquet of the god and of his priests, which took place at sun-set.

³ Herodotus, who thinks that all religious pilgrimages and processions were devised in Egypt, describes six

arranged throughout the year according to a systematic calendar, gave rise to frequent pilgrimages and processions; while the oracles¹ of Egypt long enjoyed the highest reputation, and, like 'mysteries' of which she was acknowledged the inventor, furnished models to the imitative genius of her western neighbours.

It is always in the sacrificial rites of a religious system that we trace the consciousness in man of his dependence on the powers above him, or of his estrangement from the source of life and blessedness. And Egypt, as we might anticipate, is no exception to this universal law. There, also, to omit the merely eucharistic² class of sacrifices, man had ever indicated his persuasion that he was no longer what he ought to be, nor what he knew he might eventually become. He felt that one or all the gods were standing to him in the posture of hostility, and therefore trusted by piacular offerings to avert the outburst of their indignation and alleviate the burden of his sin. With this conception, animal sacrifices seem to have been offered on Egyptian altars during the whole of the historic period. 'Without shedding of blood there is no remission.' Here had culminated the idea of

CHAP.
I.

Oracles.

*Doctrine of
sacrifice.*

of the principal feasts (II. 59 sq.); but these were a small portion only of such public celebrations: see Uhlemann, *Aegypt. Alt.* II. 200 sq.

¹ *Ibid.* pp. 216 sq. From Herodotus (II. 57, 58) we also learn that the method of divining from victims (τῶν ἑρῶν ἡ μαντική) was of Egyptian origin.

² Cf. Part II. pp. 155 sq. Such offerings as wine, oil, or other liquid,

or any single gift, as a necklace, a bouquet of flowers, a bunch of vegetables, and the like (Wilkinson, 2nd ser. II. 338) come under this description. They were generally the expressions of gratitude for benefits received, or, as in India, may have sometimes been connected with a fancy that the minor gods at least were actually delighted by human articles of food and dress.

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CHAP. I. heathen as of other sacrifice¹: and in the case of Egypt it was put on record that the offerer sometimes manifested more than common sensibility as to the thoughts which underlay this branch of his symbolic ritual. He was accustomed to bewail the sufferings of the victim he had stretched upon the altar; and when it sank beneath the sacrificial knife he turned and smote himself². A prayer³ was also offered on more critical occasions that 'if any calamity were about to befall either the sacrificer or the land of Egypt, it might all be concentrated on the victim's head;' which was accordingly not eaten by the worshipper but thrown as a devoted thing into the Nile, or else was sold to foreign traders.

How connected with the worship of sacred animals.

The oblation of such sacrifices was the more remarkable in Egypt, owing to the number of the sacred animals there worshipped and the depth of the reluctance which was felt to the effusion of their blood. It must indeed have been the memory of some older teaching, and the force of irresistible impulse thus communicated, which constrained the worshipper to sacrifice not merely geese and other birds, but also his choice oxen and the male calves of the herd. We trace, again, the consequence of struggles which had long been waged between the obligation to offer animal victims, and the obligation to preserve those brutes which he had deemed especially sacred, in the fact that cows and heifers were at length excluded

¹ Wilkinson, 2nd ser. I. 146, 147.

² Lucian, *De Sacrificiis* (Opp. p. 187, B, Paris, 1615): αἱ δὲ θυγαῖ καὶ παρ' ἐκείνοις αἱ αὐταί· πλὴν ὅτι περ-

θοῦσι τὸ λερεῖον, καὶ κόπτονται περὶ σῶντες ἤδη πεφονευμένον.

³ Herod. II. 39.

altogether from the list of offerings, and that consequently to offer them was 'to sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians¹.' It is further noticeable, as supporting this conjecture, that a large proportion of Egyptian sacrifices were selected from the class of animals, which men had learned to call *Typhonic*, so that the thing offered was no more the choicest property of the sacrificer, but a creature hostile both to him and all the tutelary gods of Egypt². An exemplification of such offering is presented in the custom of choosing *red*³ oxen for oblations, on the ground that Typhon was himself entirely of that colour. And the same idea is also still more closely intimated in the ancient practice of sacrificing what were called Typhonic men, or red-haired strangers⁴, at the tomb of Osiris. Attempts, indeed, are made continually by some writers to discredit the account, which comes to us from Manetho, in reference to this horrible distortion of the rite of sacrifice; but the existence of such usages appears to be unquestionable, attested as it is distinctly by a native priest, and illustrated by the constant practice of most other demi-civilised communities in both the Old World and the New.

CHAP.
I.

*Typhonic
victims,*

*sometimes
human.*

¹ See Exod. viii. 26, 27, and Wilkinson, 2nd ser. II. 347, 348.

² Plutarch, *De Is. et Os.* c. XXXI.: *θύσιμον γὰρ οὐ φίλον εἶναι θεοῖς, ἀλλὰ τοῦναντίον, ὅσα ψυχὰς ἀνοσίων ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἀδίκων εἰς ἕτερα μεταμορφουμένων σώματων συνελήφε.*

³ Herod. II. 38; Diodor. I. 18. If a single black hair was found on the ox, it was sacred to Epaphus (Apis), and as such was accounted 'unclean,' and as such was accounted 'unclean,' or no proper subject for sacrifice.

⁴ Diodor. I. 88. Porphyry, *De*

Abstinētia, II. 55, and Plutarch, *De Is. et Os.* c. LXXIII. both quote Manetho as the authority for this inhuman practice, which, he says, was abandoned by a king named Amosis, who substituted a waxen image for the live victim. Herodotus, however, denies (II. 45) that this practice, which had been abolished long before his time, had ever existed; asking, if the Egyptians were so scrupulous about offering animals, *ὥς ἂν οὖτοι ἀνθρώπους θύοιεν*;

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CHAP. I. The very seal made use of in historic ages to denote the fitness of a given victim bore the figure of a man kneeling, with his hands bound behind him, and a sword pointed at his throat¹. In this unnatural act of bringing to the altar of the gods a victim capable of perfect sympathy with the sacrificer, there is always visible, amid the glare of selfish and vindictive passions, the stern truth that nothing short of human blood was deemed an adequate offering to the highest gods of Egypt, or sufficient for the liquidation of the penalty entailed from time to time by human disobedience.

*Worship of
ancestors.*

But the sacrifice which the Egyptian offered to his gods was followed, as in other parts of heathendom², by sacrifices for and to the spirits of departed ancestors. His dedication of himself to Ptah, to Ammon-Ra, or to Osiris, was the first and principal act of homage; but the next³ consisted in the dedication of his own heart to his buried mother, and included a long series of funereal rites by means of which he strove to pay due honour to the 'authors of his body.' Offerings of this class appear to have especially evoked the better feelings of the Old Egyptian; and the prayers which he addressed to his departed ancestors, as well as to Osiris in their favour, prove, if not the moral elevation of his creed, at least the freshness and the strength of his domestic instincts.

2. It is, however, in the views presented of

¹ Kenrick I. 442; Döllinger, p. 442; Uhlemann, II. 191. This scene, however, may possibly allude to the vicarious nature of the sacrifice.

² See, for example, Part III. pp. 32, 125, 176, 196, and Appendix II. at the end of this Part.

³ *Revue Archéol.* XIV^e année, p. 194.

the Old Egyptian in the world beyond the grave that we discover the foundation of his ethical system. Principles of action which had guided him in this life are reflected with peculiar vividness and fulness in the judgment-scenes belonging to the next. The chief authorities for statements on the fortunes of the soul in hades are derived from extant Rituals of the Dead, rolled up in a cylindrical form and not unfrequently discovered in sarcophagi of different periods. As this class of documents, in one shape or other, may be carried back into the earlier dynasties,—supplying to the disembodied soul of every age a kind of guide-book for her pilgrimages in the train of Osiris through the regions of the under-world,—it is indisputable that the Old Egyptian was no stranger to the cardinal truths connected with the prolongation of man's being after death, his conscious and unwearying exercise of functions proper to humanity, and his exposure to the scrutiny of supernatural agents on account of 'things done in the body'.¹ Of the hundred and sixty-five chapters which fill up the most remarkable of these Rituals, one is entitled, 'On the life after death;' and the volume, notwithstanding all its mystic names and undecypherable images, is found to be pervaded by the same idea of individual immortality. The vividness of such conceptions is particularly manifested in the fact that nearly all conditions of the present life, in their most earthy and unspiritual

CHAP.
I.

*Egyptian
doctrine of
a future
life:*

*its peculiar
character-
istics.*

¹ Mr Osburn is at one with all Egyptologists when he says (*Mon. Hist.* I. 424): 'The truth that man will be judged after death was

brought into Egypt by the first settlers, and universally received by their posterity.'

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CHAP.
I.

shape, had been transferred into man's theory of the life which is to come. At an Egyptian funeral, common articles of food and dress, and certain implements of war, of business and of pleasure were deposited with or near the corpse: the scenes of daily life were pictured on the mummy-cases, not so much in order to express the piety of survivors, as to gratify and stimulate the dead: a string of prayers and other formulæ were also buried with him for his constant admonition, and as passports through the unknown world to which he had been destined; and at length when he was entering the 'dark place' itself, the popular belief assigned him 'bread and drink, and slices of flesh off the table of the Sun; when he peregrinates the fields of the blessed, corn and barley are given to him, for he is as provided as he was upon earth¹.'

*Antiquity
of this
doctrine in
Egypt.*

It has been held indeed, on the authority of Herodotus, that the Egyptians were the *first* people of the ancient world to inculcate this doctrine of the immortality of the human soul; and doubtless the habitual and unfaltering affirmation of it was to some extent *Egyptian*, and was that which gave their highest charm to the Osirian tenets in the eye of other nations: but the language of the Greek historian, properly expounded, means² no more

¹ *Todtenbuch* in Birch's *Egypt. Hierog.* p. 272: cf. Döllinger, p. 432, who traces the origin of this kind of phraseology to a principle which recurs in almost every heathen system, viz. a belief in the quasi-materiality of the human soul. It was not regarded as a purely spiritual essence, 'sondern als eine körperliche, nur feinere Substanz, welche

im jenseitigen Leben durch mancherlei Wanderungen hindurchgehe, bis sie geläutert—als solche dargestellt in der Form eines Sperbers mit Menschenkopf—zur vollen Anschauung des göttlichen Sonnenlichts sich empor-schwingt.'

² After telling us (II. 123) that the Egyptians look upon Dionysus and Demeter (Osiris and Isis) as the

than that Egyptians were the first people, who, cherishing the thought of some ulterior existence, had imparted to it novel characteristics by presenting it in the form of a theory of transmigration. CHAP.
I.

In thus embracing the idea of changes from the human to the bestial and the meanest even of all reptile forms, the Old Egyptians occupied the same position as Hindús throughout the second, or Bráhmánic, period of their history. In both those countries we have seen how the religion of the choicer few, as well as of the populace itself, was ultimately pantheistic; and in both accordingly the dogma of transmigration had been strengthened, if not first of all suggested, by the reverence men were taught to feel for each of the innumerable varieties of animated nature. Transmigration was, however, viewed in both these systems as a dire calamity; and therefore to obtain exemption from its fatal law became in both the foremost duty of their genuine votaries. Each pursued this object in a different spirit and by methods of his own devising. The Hindús of every school, the Bráhmán and the Buddhist also, shrinking as far as possible from contact with material forms, and casting off as evil all that ministered to the idea of personal immortality, contended that emancipation could be only found amid the loftiest peaks of human knowledge; and accordingly pushed forward, in the one case to complete identification

*Hindú and
Egyptian
theories of
transmi-
gration.*

rulers of hades, he continues: Πρώτοι δὲ καὶ τὸνδε τὸν λόγον Αἰγύπτιοι εἰσι οἱ εἰπόντες· ὡς ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴ ἀθάνατος ἐστὶ, τοῦ σώματος δὲ καταφθίνοντος ἐς ἄλλο ζῶον αἰεὶ γινόμενον ἐσδύεται· ἐπεὶ δὲ περιέλθῃ πάντα

τὰ χερσαῖα καὶ τὰ θαλάσσια καὶ τὰ πετεινὰ, αὕτις ἐς ἀνθρώπου σῶμα γινόμενον ἐσδύνει· the term of these transmigrations being 3000 years, i. e. one Sothis-period.

82 *Characteristics of Egyptian Heathenism.*

CHAP. with Divinity itself, and in the other, to the dismal
I. void of utter non-existence.

*Egyptian
interest in
the fortunes
of the
body.*

The Egyptian, on the contrary, had no such fundamental dread of matter and experienced no temptation to accept a theory fatal to the prolongation of his individual being. He was rather prone to speculations which distrusted or depressed the spiritual part of man. The conservation of the body, he imagined, was essential to the vigour and felicity of the soul. Attempts were, therefore, made in Egypt from an early period to exalt, and in one sense immortalise¹, the body by the well-known system of embalming. Let the bodily organs, it was felt, be saved from putrefaction, and the spirit also will have something left on which to lean for help as her companion and receptacle. In virtue of the strength afforded to her by this union with the former cause of her vitality, she will continue to subsist in some analogous condition; disembodied, it is true, but still associating with her previous tenement, and still in some mysterious fashion living by its life.

Mummification.

The vast importance of such interaction had impelled the Old Egyptian worthy to lavish his chief skill and treasure on the building and adornment of his tomb. He made it capable of defying

¹ This interpretation of the custom of embalming has come down to us through Servius (*ad Æneid.* III. 67); and has certainly the advantage of accounting for many practices connected with the burial of the dead. But we have now abundant reason for concluding that the *perfect purification* of the body, and not its conservation merely, was at the root of the ideas expressed in

every act of mummification. Thus in Brugsch's edition of the *Sat An Sinsin* (p. 25), it is said, 'Dein Leib ist nun rein durch Wasser und Laugensalz, kein Glied an dir ist unrein; geläutert von allem Uebel und allem Schmutz kommst du zum Richterstuhle...dein Herz ist nun das Herz des Ra, deine Glieder sind die Glieder des grossen Horus.'

the malignity of Typhon and the wildest fury of the elements: he covered it with pleasant pictures, the mementoes of a happy life on earth; he called the sepulchre itself, his dwelling place and 'everlasting home¹.' His mummy, in like manner, was entitled 'habitation of Osiris²;' on the type supplied by the arch-mummy of that god, all others had from age to age been scrupulously moulded; prayers were also offered to Osiris for the purpose of securing their incorruptibility³; and as the principal organs of the body were all deemed essential to the rightful actings of the spirit, every limb was now consigned to the protection of one single deity; while Seb, the father of Osiris, was himself entrusted with the guardianship of edifices where the mummy was enshrined.

But while conceding that some minor difficulties continue to embarrass the solution of this problem with respect to the precise intention of embalming, as well as to the limits placed by the Egyptian creed upon the metempsychosis of one class of disembodied spirits and their wanderings through 'the cycle of necessity,' it is impossible to doubt that, in the later periods of Egyptian independence, every spirit was believed to pass at once from this life to *Amenthe*, the dim region of the under-world, in which account was solemnly taken by Osiris of its actions and its words. In this be-

CHAP.
I.

Judgment
after death.

¹ Diodor. I. 51: διδίους οίκους προσαγορεύουσιν, ὡς ἐν ἔθου διατελούντων τὸν ἀπειρον αἰῶνα. Wilkinson (2nd ser. II. 445) seems to think that this care of the dead body intimated a belief in its eventual resurrection; but, as Prichard long ago remarked (*E. Mythol.* p. 198), if this

doctrine 'was really prevalent among the Egyptians, we must suppose that they took extraordinary care to conceal it, since not the slightest hint respecting it has reached our times:' cf. Müller, *Amerikan. Urreleg.* p. 402.

² Osburn, I. 427.

³ See examples in Döllinger, p. 432.

CHAP.
I.

lief, so universally diffused, we see the clearest and most urgent motive to a course of upright living which the Old Egyptian had been made to feel. The duties which he recognised as proper to the gods, his neighbour and himself, may all be gathered from the judgment-scenes enacted at the great tribunal of Osiris.

Light reflected on the nature of Egyptian ethics.

On examining the pictures thus transmitted to us, we discover that not a few of the more heinous sins remaining to be expiated in a future life consisted of deflections from a long array of merely ceremonial precepts. Every thing in ancient Egypt, not excluding the most ordinary avocations and most trivial pastimes of the people, had been thrust beneath the iron yoke of arbitrary legislation. As the Nile, for instance, was a sacred river, and as such invoked in the Egyptian hymns¹ among the foremost of the national gods, whatever bore directly on the culture of the soil and the succession of the crops in every district of the Nile-valley was enforced among the duties claimed from husbandmen by that divinity. 'To brush its sacred surface with the balance-bucket at a forbidden time was a crime equal in atrocity to that of reviling the face of a king or of a father'.² The spirit, therefore, which presided over all the social institutions of the Pharaonic empire was akin to that which we have watched already shaping the national character of the Chinese; it was exclusive³, cramping,

¹ A stanza of one such hymn is given by Mr Birch, as before, p. 268.

² Osburn, I. 435.

³ Thus in the deprecations of a spirit on approaching the judicial balance, she is made to protest 'I have not changed the customs, nei-

ther have I enacted foreign abominations.' (*Ibid.* p. 432). Hence the violent hatred of all strangers which was highly characteristic of the Old Egyptians: see Hengstenberg, *Dissertations on the Pentateuch*, II. 458, Edinb. 1847.

isolating, stern, prohibitive, despotic. And corresponding to this general estimate is the discovery CHAP.
I. that the virtues there imputed to the Old Egyptians are nearly always of a negative kind. The spirit at the bar of judgment ever struggles to evince her own integrity,—‘to justify herself’—and is accordingly most earnest in proclaiming her habitual abstinence from open vice and from all possible breaches of the ceremonial institute. She can declare, indeed, on some occasions, that she has ‘given bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, garments to the naked, and asylum to the wretched outcast¹,’ as well as proper victims to the gods and the funereal offerings to the manes; but her language in the great majority of recorded judgment-scenes is rather that of confident *disavowal*; while confessions of innate depravity, or appeals to the forgiving mercy of the judge, appear to find no echo in Egyptian Rituals.

The deceased is, in those Rituals, pictured, first of all, as undergoing a long series of preliminary transformations in order to evade the malice of ^{*Progress of the deceased in the underworld.*} infernal demons, and ‘obtain his heart.’ He enters the bark of the Egyptian Charon², and crosses over to the ‘Hall of the Two Truths;’ the title of which is borrowed from the goddesses of Truth and Justice, who assist in all determinations of Osiris. Ever since the mythic death ascribed to this divinity, it is believed that he has sat in judgment on the souls of men; and every spirit on

¹ *Revue Archéol.* xiv^e année, p. 194.

² According to Diodor. I. 96, the word *Charon* is itself Egyptian (*χαρω*

= ‘silence’): cf. Uhlemann, *Thoth*, p. 62. Rhadamanthus, in like manner, is by some connected with the Egyptian *Amenthe*.

CHAP. admission finds him ready at his post, attended by
 I. Anubis, 'the director of the balance,' by Horus waiting to conduct acquitted mortals to the nearer presence of Osiris, and by Thoth, the great recorder, with a tablet in his hand. The heart of the deceased which after various struggles has been rescued from the demons of the under-world is now submitted to the fatal balance. Formulæ of exculpation¹ are presented to him; and although he is supposed to meet the reckoning solely in its own strength and to escape the crisis only when assured of personal innocence, some friendly guidance is upon his own petition administered by Thoth, the Mercury of the Egyptian hades. Of the formulæ² here mentioned one consists of deprecatory addresses to the gods of the Hall of Judgment, the divine assessors of Osiris. In the second a long catalogue of sins are, one by one, denied or disavowed, before the 'two and forty avengers,' who as the personifications of the sins themselves are represented waiting for the adverse inclination of the balance, in order to inflict their torments on the soul of the condemned.

*Formula of
 self-excul-
 pation.*

I give the former series at full length, because it tends far more than any others to exhibit the religion of the Old Egyptians in a favourable light, and illustrates the nature of that secret and self-judging law, which every where in spite of intellectual aberrations is still active, in the cause of

¹ It is worth while to compare the protests of the Old Egyptian as recorded in his *Ritual* with those contained in the 31st chapter of the Book of Job. The points of simi-

larity and of contrast are equally instructive.

² They are translated from the *Todtenbuch* by Mr Osburn, I. 430 sq.

truth and righteousness, among the inmost fibres of the human heart: CHAP.
I.

1. I have neither done any sin, nor omitted any duty to any man.
2. I have committed no uncleanness.
3. I have not prevaricated at the seat of justice.
4. I have not spoken lightly.
5. I have done no shameful thing.
6. I have not omitted [certain] ceremonies.
7. I have not blasphemed with my mouth.
8. I have not perverted justice.
9. I have not acted perversely.
10. I have not shortened the cubit.
11. I have not done that which is abominable to the gods.
12. I have not sullied my own purity.
13. I have not made men to hunger.
14. I have not made men to weep.
15. I have done no act of rapine¹.
16. I have not accused of rapine falsely.
17. I have not revived an ancient falsehood before the face of man.
18. I have not forged the deeds of sluices, houses, or lands.
19. I have not forged any of the divine images.
20. I have not withheld the seven linen garments due to the priests.
21. I have not committed adultery.
22. I have not polluted the purity of my divine land (*i. e.* my tomb).
23. I have not been avaricious.
24. I have not forged signet-rings.
25. I have not cut down on my mother's land (*i. e.* my maternal inheritance) the timber that grows thereon.
26. I have not falsified the weights of the balance.
27. I have not withheld milk from the mouths of the infants.

¹ The besetting sin of the Old Egyptian appears to have been *theft*, for which he had obtained a special notoriety, as well as, it would seem,

a kind of legal indulgence (Herod. II. 121; Aulus Gellius, xi. 18; Diodor. I. 80).

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CHAP. I.

28. I have not driven away the flocks from their pasturage.
29. I have not netted [the] ducks [of the Nile] illegally.
30. I have not caught [the] fishes [of the Nile] illegally.
31. I have not [unlawfully] pierced the bank of the river when it was increasing.
32. I have not separated for myself [clandestinely] a channel (*lit.* arm) from the river when it was subsiding.
33. I have not extinguished the perpetual lamp (*lit.* hourly lamp).
34. I have not added anything to any of the sacred books.
35. I have not driven off any of the sacred cattle.
36. I have not stabbed the god (*i. e.* sacred animal), when he comes forth [from his shrine].

*Fate of the
condemned.*

Wherever the Egyptian failed to pass this ordeal, and the second not unlike it, he incurred a dark succession of tremendous penalties. The hapless spirit, banished from the presence of Osiris, who inclines his sceptre in token of disapprobation, is now hurried back to earth by ministers of vengeance in the hideous form of apes. She migrates from the human to the bestial sphere of being, and commencing with some animal shape¹ to which indeed she had contracted an affinity by former habits, she proceeds from year to year, from century to century, now rising and now sinking in the scale of creaturely existence, till at last the destined cycle is completed by the winding up of all things. The most abject stage in this rotation seems to be the lowest region of *Kar-Neter*, the Phlegethon of the Greeks. 'None of the dead can endure it;

¹ Wilkinson, as above, p. 447. It is rarely, however, as Mr Kenrick remarks (i. 480), that we find 'among the funereal monuments of Egypt anything which relates to the metempsychosis;' the reason, perhaps,

being that every embalmed corpse, duly interred, was *presumed* by the survivors to have passed the scrutiny of the infernal judge, and so was in a state of permanent felicity.

the waters being of flame and waves of fire of the most intense and unconquerable heat; while the thirst of the dead in it is unquenchable; and they have no peace in it, because it is filled with weeds and filth¹.

CHAP.
I.

But on the contrary the human spirit who has stood the various tests applied to her at the tribunal of Osiris, passes on with the permission of the demons, and moves freely through the joyous halls of *Aahlu* (Elysium). Her body also purified at length, by its evisceration², from all properties which rendered it offensive to the gods has been assimilated by the mummifying process to the actual form of Osiris. The whole man, according to the later representations, has become *Osiri-anised*; the name of the great sun-god is combined, without distinction of age or calling, with the name of the departed mortal; he attains to a subordinate stage of deification; he acquires a faculty of self-translation and self-transformation³, just as the condemned are driven onward by some irresistible fate into the forms of animal life; he

Privileges
of the ac-
quitted.

¹ Birch, as above, p. 275.

² See the remarkable passage in Porphyry (*De Abstinencia*, IV. 10), where is preserved the invocation addressed by the embalmers to the sun in the name of the deceased; at the end of which he is made to say, 'If I have committed any other fault during my life, either in eating or drinking, it has not been done on my own account, but on account of these;' pointing to the chest containing the viscera. Such passages (cf. Part II. p. 37) remind one of St Augustine's statement respecting himself while he continued a Manichæan: 'Adhuc enim mihi videba-

tur, non esse nos qui peccamus, sed nescio quam aliam in nobis peccare naturam,' (*Confess.* v. 10). It is also worthy of remark that while expressions such as those just cited have a *Manichæan* aspect, overlooking or denying the freedom of the creature, the general tendency of the religions of Egypt, of Phœnicia and of Babylonia, was rather towards a *Pelagian* estimate of human sinfulness.

³ Döllinger, p. 434: cf. Part II. p. 136, n. 2, where a similar faculty is said to have entered into the Hindú conception of original 'perfectness.'

CHAP. I. issues forth at will into the upper regions; he soars high above the earth with the alertness of the hawk or ibis; he revisits the sepulchre in which his body is preserved and thence derives a fresh accession to his vital powers. He inherits the two-fold life of the divine Osiris; all his happiness consists in tracking that illustrious sun-god, in addressing adorations to him, and in sailing with him through his daily circuits, in the barge employed by him to circumnavigate the firmament, or 'waters of the heavenly Nile.'

In other words, the Sun which to Egyptians had for ages been the grandest symbol of their deities, and not unfrequently the glorious home or vehicle of Deity itself, was also the most lofty image they could form of pure and ultimate enjoyment. The reward of all acquitted spirits was translation from the sacred Valley of the Nile, its joys and sorrows and mutations, to the one unchanging source of brilliance and fertility. 'This great god speaks to them and they speak to him; his glory illuminates them in the splendour of his disc, while he is shining in their sphere¹.'

¹ Rosellini, in Kenrick, I. 487.

CHAPTER II.

Alleged Affinities between the Hebrew and Egyptian Systems.

Κατὰ τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα Αἰγύπτου, ἐν ᾗ κατφκήσατε ἐπ' αὐτῇ, οὐ ποιήσετε, καὶ κατὰ τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα γῆς Σαναὰν, εἰς ἣν ἐγὼ εἰσάγω ὑμᾶς ἐκεῖ, οὐ ποιήσετε, καὶ τοῖς νομίμοις αὐτῶν οὐ πορεύσεσθε. τὰ κρίματά μου ποιήσετε, καὶ τὰ προστάγματά μου φυλάξεσθε, καὶ πορεύεσθε ἐν αὐτοῖς. ΕἶΩ ΚΤΡΙΟΣ Ο ΘΕΟΣ ΤΜΩΝ. LEVIT. XVIII. 3, 4. (LXX.)

THAT some examples of external correspondency, CHAP.
II.
more marked and less fortuitous than any we have hitherto detected, can be traced between the ritual codes of the Egyptian and the Hebrew, is no longer questioned even by the warmest advocate of supernatural religion¹. These affinities, however, as we might at once anticipate from the absorbing interest of the points involved, give birth to a variety of conflicting interpretations. Some, for instance, have contended that as early as the age of Abraham, the priests of Lower Egypt were induced to borrow from him certain portions of the patriarchal creed, as well as to accept instruction at his hands in secular and useful learning. *Different theories on this subject.*

¹ Thus, Witsius in his *Ægyptiaca*, p. 4, Basil. 1739, declares expressly 'magnam atque mirandam plane convenientiam in religionis negotio veteres inter Ægyptios atque Hebræos esse,' and adds: 'Quæ cum fortuita esse non possit, necesse est ut vel Ægyptii sua ab Hebræis, vel ex adverso Hebræi sua ab Ægyptiis habeant.' And Hengstenberg, in our own day, makes a similar ad-

mission: 'He [Spencer] sets out with an assertion—in the main correct, but pushed by him to an extreme—that many parts of the Mosaic ceremonial law present a striking agreement with the religious usages of heathen nations, particularly of the Egyptians.' *Dissertations on the Genuineness of the Pentateuch*, I. 4, Edinb. 1847.

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Others, on the contrary, affirm that Abraham himself and his descendants in the time of Moses had not scrupled in particular cases to incorporate the riper wisdom of the land of Egypt with their own hereditary laws and their most cherished institutions. While a third class, arguing from the fact that both these peoples radiated from a common centre, would refer the numerous points of similarity which they exhibit to the influence of a purer and more primitive generation, when the fathers of the Hebrew race still¹ recognised the sacred character of worthies like Melchisedek, and communed with them as with 'priests of the most high God.'

*Different
motives of
the theo-
rists.*

The feelings also which suggest the different theories on this subject are as widely different as the theories themselves. On the one side stand the writers both of earlier and later ages, who are actuated by a strong conviction that we had almost 'as well not worship God at all as worship Him by rites which have been employed in paganism².' The presence in the Bible of some element of faith or worship, known to have been actually borrowed from the primitive faith or worship of the circumjacent heathen would in their view silence or invalidate all arguments in favour of a special Revelation; and accordingly they feel concerned to demonstrate that 'images of truth,' wherever such exist in Gentilism, were merely due to the refracted

¹ See Part I. p. 92, n. 2.

² This is Warburton's characteristic way of putting the case of his opponents: cf. *Div. Leg.* II. 312 sq. Lond. 1846. A similar class of scruples have occasionally peeped out in discussions of the post-Re-

formation period on the subject of ecclesiastical vestments and other ceremonies: e.g. at the Hampton Court Conference, where objections were urged against the surplice, on the ground that such a dress was worn of old time by priests of Isis.

rays of supernatural light whose proper sphere was in the bosom of the sacred family. Others, unrestrained by feelings of this kind, nay, anxious even, it would seem, at all hazards to multiply the points of sympathy between the Hebrew and the heathen systems, find their only possible justification of the ceremonial law of Moses in assuming its profound dependence on the institutes of the Egyptian lawgivers. While particular branches of that ritual were (say they) intended to condemn or counteract the grosser vices of polytheism, the general object was to gratify a multitude of childish prejudices¹, which the Hebrew had contracted in the course of his long residence in Egypt. Customs and ideas of heathenish extraction were engrafted on the Law, and that by the express authority of God Himself, in order to amuse the fancy, and preoccupy the spirit of the Israelitish people, who might else, through their incorrigible love of superstitious imagery and impatience of all purely spiritual truth, have been seduced into apostasy.

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II.

¹ Spencer's work, *De Legibus Hebræorum ritualibus*, is pervaded by this strange idea. As Bähr expresses it (*Symbolik des Mosaischen Cultus*, i. 41, Heidelberg, 1837), God appears in his theory 'as a Jesuit who makes use of bad means [Spencer himself says *ineptiæ tolerabiles*] to bring about a good result.' In some respects the legal institute might justly be regarded by the Christian Fathers as a kind of *condescension* to the wants and weaknesses of man, and consequently as a *συνκατάθεσις* or *accommodation* to the actual status of its Jewish subjects (cf. Acts xiii. 18); but Spencer's theory is a coarse and violent perversion of this philo-

sophic principle. Instead of looking on the law of Moses as a lower and symbolic form of true religion, possessing therefore an internal fitness, and a definite place in the grand scheme of man's redemption, he could see in it nothing more than a huge 'apparatus of ceremonies,' having 'no agreement with the nature of God.' Perhaps the closest of patristic approximations to his standing-ground occurs in one of the letters of Gregory the Great (*Bed. Hist. Eccl.* i. 30): with which may be compared the startling assertions of Mr D. I. Heath, *Exodus Papyri*, pp. 103 sq. Lond. 1855.

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One school of modern writers has, however, accepted this position so far only as to grant that several usages commanded in the Law of Moses were in fact adapted from the ritual code of the Egyptians; but instead of finding in that circumstance a reason for disparaging the ceremonial system of the Hebrews, they proceed to build on their admission a fresh argument in favour of the early date and high authority of the Pentateuch¹.

Real influence exerted by Egypt on the minds of the Hebrews.

Now, if we try to disembarass our minds as far as possible from any mere presumptions, it is evident that contradictory theories in vogue with reference to alleged resemblances between the Hebrew and Egyptian systems are in almost every case extravagant or superficial or one-sided. We are bound, for instance, to acknowledge on the threshold, that some very deep impressions had been made upon the sons of Abraham by their continued sojourn in the empire of the Pharaohs. From the nature of the case the Hebrews must have been disciples and not doctors. Going down a handful of mere nomades to that country of the ancient world whose institutions had been longest organised, they could not fail to have experienced the transforming influence everywhere implied in such an altered mode of life. We know, indeed, for certain that the land of Goshen proved the nursery of their national spirit, and the training-

¹ This, for example, appears to be the moving principle of Dr Hengstenberg in his *Die Bücher Moses und Ägypten*, Berlin, 1841, where the points of outward similarity are unduly multiplied. His own avowal is: 'Je ursprünglicher, selbststän-

diger und einzigartiger die Israelitische Religion in Bezug auf den Geist war, desto weniger hatte sie es nöthig, mit scheuer Aengstlichkeit jede äussere Berührung mit den Religionen anderer Völker zu vermeiden,' (p. 153).

school in which they gradually imbibed some elements of art, of agriculture and of civil polity. We know, again, that during their abode in Egypt, the majority of Hebrews proper,—to say nothing of the ‘great mixed multitude,’ who having learned to share their fortunes were blended with them at the Exodus,—contracted more and more a fondness for Egyptian thoughts and customs, utterly at variance with the creed inherited from their fathers¹. The same vicious predilection had moreover gained such stubborn hold upon them that in after-ages it was constantly evincing its importance and could scarcely ever be eradicated.

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Nor have these considerations been sufficiently answered by the plea that all the popular bias on the side of Egypt, active as it was before the promulgation of the Law, had constituted an additional reason why the Law-giver should abstain from every thing which countenanced or confirmed it: since, according to the framers of the theory of accommodation, it was politic in Moses to recognise and so to consecrate, as far as might be, what the present temper of the Hebrew people rendered him unable to displace. Nay, ask these writers, might not Moses be induced to grant some measure of indulgence to his weak and sense-bound followers by his own experience of the real strength of their temptations, or the real good which might have been educible from heathen customs? Educated from his earliest childhood in the court of the Egyptian monarch, and, it may be, actually initiated² into the sacred circles of the priesthood, was

*Further
specula-
tions on
this point.*

¹ On their religious condition II. 38—42.
while in Egypt, see Kurtz, *Gesch.*

² Cf. Uhlemann's *Thoth*, p. 6.

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II.

he not (say they) both skilled in the symbolic ordinances of Egyptian worship and enabled to discern the hidden truths which lay enveloped in the midst of it? If many of the oldest Greek philosophers, as Thales or Pythagoras¹ or Plato, who had sojourned there a shorter period, could return exulting from the land of Egypt laden with a rich variety of intellectual spoils; if through their visits many a germ of mathematical science and the outlines of a purer system of ethics and theology were rescued from comparative oblivion; if the principle of distributing their pupils into outer and inner classes, an enlarged conception of the grandeur of the universe, or a more fascinating list of dogmas, such as that of transmigration and the like, had all been widely spread along the shores of the Mediterranean, why should not the foster-child of Pharaoh's daughter have been equally imbued with reverence for ideas and institutions of his adopted country², or at least inclined to tolerate in others what to lofty spirits like his own may have been radiant with the light of true philosophy?

¹ The prohibition by Pythagoras of *all* animal food and *all* animal sacrifices (adduced by Uhlemann, *Thoth*, p. 12, as an illustration of his Egyptising) has rather a Hindú aspect; and of later years, indeed, it has grown fashionable to speak of the founder of Pythagoreanism as a kind of Buddhist missionary; his name or title (Pythagoras = 'Buddha-guru') being quoted as confirmatory of such hypotheses. Others, however, dwell upon his supposed Phœnician origin, and so make him the depository of Semitic, if

not Biblical, traditions; while many of his ascetic principles are clearly traceable among the Palestinian Essenes.

² Miss Martineau, *Eastern Life*, p. 104, tells us that Plato came to Egypt, 'and sat, where Moses had sat, at the feet of the priests, gaining, as Moses had gained, an immortal wisdom from their lips:' but when she adds that Moses learned to become 'a redeem-legislator,' as Plato a 'spiritual philosopher,' I confess my utter inability to understand her meaning.

Now let it be conceded, in reply to these sur-
 mises, that the 'human learning' of the Hebrew
 legislator was from first to last *Egyptian*. Let it
 also be conceded that the fondness of his subjects
 for Egyptian ritualism was such as to have baffled
 all the wisest schemes designed to counteract it;
 and enough will yet remain to make us hesitate
 before subscribing to this novel phase of the ac-
 commodation-theory. If the Books of Moses be
 accepted as our guide (and other guidance in this
 region we have none), is it consistent either with
 their letter or their spirit that the Law, as autho-
 rised at such a crisis by God Himself, could carry
 with it any sanction of things *purely heathenish* in
 their nature? Was it not pervaded by indignant
 protests against heathenism as such? The call of
 Moses, the appointed legislator, was as critical and
 peremptory as the call of the Apostle of the Gen-
 tiles: it was also followed by a like inversion and
 revulsion in the spirit of the 'chosen vessel.' He too
 had been sent to 'bear the name of God before the
 Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel,' and
 to suffer for that Name's sake (cf. Acts ix. 15, 16).
 He learned at starting on his mission, and he kept
 engraven ever on his mind a clear idea of the
 'complete and absolute distinction of the Jewish
 faith from that of any other ancient nation'. This
 distinctness of position and belief, proclaimed no
 more through hieroglyphs intelligible only to the
 few, but in the ordinary writing of the Hebrew
 people, was exactly in accordance with the destiny
 marked out for them as conservators of the true
 religion. The whole genius therefore of their

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II.

*Antecedent
improbabi-
lity that
heathenish
ideas were
adopted in
Hebraism.*

¹ Cf. Dr Donaldson's *Christian Orthodoxy*, p. 117, Lond. 1857.

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institutions was distinctive, separative, incapable of compromise, impatient of amalgamation; so distinctive, so peculiar, that the wonderful vitality of Hebraism in after-times can only be explained on the hypothesis that men's devotion to it had been supernaturally produced, and ever since the childhood of the nation had been growing upward with their growth. Or if advancing from these general probabilities we study some of the first chapters in the national records of the Israelites, we shall again perceive at every turn the traces of antagonism between their own and the Egyptian system. In the Exodus itself, which led the way to the formation of the legal institute, we have to witness no mere secular emancipation from the yoke of a new line of Pharaohs, but the mightiest of religious victories which the ancient world had seen. Designed to vindicate the personality and holiness of God, as well as the distinctness of His chosen people, it was ushered in by a succession of stupendous acts which tended to rebuke and stultify the nature-worship of Mizraim: it was consummated in that moment, when the Hebrews, flushed with hope and exultation, were all forward in responding to the grateful anthem of their leader: 'I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation' (Ex. xv. 1, 2). As, therefore, in the parallel case where Christianity is struggling hand to hand with some bewitching or besotting form of heathenism, it is most needful to protect her neophyte against all risk of fresh contamination by decrying or discountenancing customs which may serve, remotely even, to perpetuate

modes of thought and feeling adverse to the right-ful exercise of her transforming influence; so the Pentateuch evinces a continual jealousy lest peradventure the old thirst for heathenish vices should be stimulated through the medium of unhallowed associations: Intermarriage, for example, with the neighbouring heathen is most sternly interdicted both by Moses and by Joshua whenever it is likely to involve among its fruits the imitation or adoption of heathen customs. The redeemed community have ample warrant for believing that they are no more a friendless band of foreign shepherds, mingled and well-nigh confounded with the meanest subjects of the Pharaohs, but 'a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, a peculiar treasure unto God above all people' (Ex. xix. 5, 6); and because the ground of such election, owing to the nature of God Himself, is ultimately and entirely moral, the elected race is under a proportionate obligation to exhibit in the sight of the surrounding world its moral superiority: 'After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do; neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. Ye shall do My judgments, and keep Mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the Lord your God.' (Lev. xviii. 3, 4).

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The question, therefore, as to the transmission of religious thoughts and usages from the Egyptian to the Hebrew is discovered to be far more complicated than at first sight may appear. It is a question, little likely to be solved, as many writers have of late attempted, by adducing an array of bare presumptions on the one side or the other.

*Mode of
investiga-
tion here
followed.*

CHAP. II. To discuss it we must enter on a rigorous examination of the facts themselves; and with a view to such investigation, I shall here arrange all possible affinities in two separate classes¹: (1) the minor points of ritualism which may have been inherited in common, or externally derived from one system to the other, without implying any true internal sympathy; and (2) the cardinal points of doctrine which must ever have determined the character of those systems, and have proved the real secret of their weakness or their strength.

§ 1. *Ritual Resemblances.*

*General
nature of
ancient
symbolism.*

Before entering on the criticism of any particular instances, it is important to recal attention to remarks already² made in reference to the offices discharged by symbolism in the religions of antiquity. The lack of any clear ideas on this point has tended more than other causes to becloud the whole of the discussions opened in the present chapter. I have urged that since the ancient Hebrew was in temperament, as also in the measure of his intellectual training, not unlike the native of surrounding countries, symbolism of some kind or other was most needful in that early period to the planting of religious truth and its development within him. He was far less capable than his remote descendants of all abstract and unearthly contemplation; he was living more than they in the impressions made upon the eyesight; and ac-

¹ All inquiries into merely civil present subject.

and political arrangements are passed over as not directly bearing on the

² Part I. pp. 100 sq.

cordingly it was the part of wisdom in obtaining from him the acceptance of a supersensuous truth to represent, or, one might say, embody it in concrete shapes, to clothe it in more visible and sensuous drapery, and enforce it by suggestive actions and symbolical institutions. Here, as in the case of teaching by parable or allegory, a pure thought has been invested in expressive forms which bring it more directly under the cognisance of every human mind endowed with the most elementary of religious intuitions. Symbol was, in other words, a species of primeval language: the symbolic institutions were the illustrated and illuminated books, in which the early generations of the human family might learn the rudiments of true religion: and, aided as it was among the Hebrews by a series of collateral expositions ever guarding it from misconstruction and reverting to the spiritual principles on which it had been framed, the ritual law was one of God's chief agents in the education of the elder Church. It deepened in man's heart the consciousness of his dependence and degeneracy; it taught the need of a redemption and foreshadowed the Redeemer; while by it the grand conception of one holy God had been associated with the homeliest of man's actions, and diffused 'into the very midst of the popular life.' Compared with Christianity, indeed, that ritual system of the Hebrew was unripe and rudimentary; it was made up of 'weak and beggarly elements;' it proved itself a Pædagogus and not *the* Teacher; the result to which it ever pointed the aspirations of its worthier subjects was not actually achieved until 'the fulness of the times had come,' until the Incarna-

*Character
of the
Mosaic in-
stitute.*

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II.

tion of the Son of God and the effusion of the quickening Spirit: yet in reference to the stage of progress then attainable by man, it offered an effectual apparatus for evoking and conserving the religious principle; and when at last the sentence of abrogation was pronounced, the law of ordinances fell, as scaffolding falls off, because the edifice it served to rear had reached the full proportions, and because a system not inglorious in itself has 'no glory in this respect by reason of the glory that excelleth.'

Under what conditions the symbolism of Hebrew and heathen systems might correspond.

If, then, sacred emblems of the ancient world were thus peculiarly significant; if symbolic institutions were a species of necessity arising out of the capacities and condition of the human mind, and so were common to the rituals both of Jew and heathen, all objections to the Bible which depend upon the *mere existence* of resemblances between these rituals, irrespectively, that is, of the ideas therein embodied, fall entirely to the ground. It would be equally presumptuous to disparage or reject the doctrines of the Gospel, prior to all scrutiny of its contents, because these doctrines are transmitted to us in the ordinary characters made use of in the printing of the other writings of antiquity, or else because particular forms of speech are found to be employed alike by the Apostle of the Gentiles, and the orators, the poets or the moralists of ancient Greece. The same outward act or emblem might continue to embody the same primitive truth and so be equally innocuous in both systems, which are made the subjects of comparison. Or, upon the other hand, it might be gradually connected in the lapse of ages with

divergent if not opposite and contradictory ideas¹. CHAP.
II.
But wherever any emblem had been consciously transferred from one ancient people to another, care would doubtless be employed to rescue it from all supposed perversions then attaching to it, so that in its fresh position it might harmonise instead of jarring with the other members of the ritual system. Let this only be effected, and a symbol used extensively in heathen countries for the representation of a thing reputed holy might be also chosen as an apt exponent of a thing more lofty and more holy still; the freedom of the symbol from profane associations facilitating the adoption of it, and imparting to it an especial fitness for its new office.

It is, therefore, highly probable that if the Hebrew legislator, acting here as always under the supreme direction of Jehovah, were induced to sanction rites and ceremonies current in the land of Egypt, or in other nations of antiquity, he was influenced by no wish to gratify the merely 'puerile superstitions' of his followers, but by reasons more exalted in themselves and more befitting his exalted

*Probable
course pur-
sued by
Moses.*

¹ The following observations of Kurtz (*Gesch. des Alten Bundes*, I. 310), though not expressing the exact view here advocated, are well worthy of attention: 'In der hohen Blüthe ägyptischer Weisheit, Cultur und Industrie hatte Israel die beste Schule menschlicher Bildung, deren es für seine künftige Bestimmung bedurfte; durch die Bekanntschaft mit der tiefen Anschauung der Aegypter, die das ganze Leben mit allen seinen Aeusserungen und Verzweigungen unter religiösen Gesichtspunkt stellte, konnte selbst Israels religiöse Anschauung mehr-

fach bereichert werden, und in der Symbolik des ägyptischen Cultus fand es schon eine völlig ausgebildete Form des religiösen Lebens vor, die, weil aus nothwendigen und allgemein gültigen Anschauungs- und Denkgesetzen des menschlichen Geistes hervorgegangen, nicht ausschliesslich nur zum Träger des ägyptischen Pantheismus anwendbar war, sondern, von dem specifisch-israelitischen Princip beseelt, verklärt und umgestaltet, auch dem Cultus des israelitischen Theismus zum willkommenen Träger dienen konnte.'

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character. He engrafted them into the legal institutions either because they were the uncorrupted heirloom of the patriarchal age, or else because, from their inherent fitness and expressiveness, they were commended to him as at once convertible in aid of the great project he was called to carry out.

*Examples
here chosen.*

The number of these ritual correspondencies is stated with considerable variety by different writers. Some¹, however, I shall scarcely glance at; first, because the facts on which it is attempted to support them are extremely vague and problematical, and, secondly, because those facts, when fully ascertained, admit of a more simple and more rational explanation. In selecting the examples here subjoined for more minute analysis, I take the points which have been universally esteemed the most important of the series, and which century after century have furnished his main arguments to the impugner of the Books of Moses.

CIRCUMCISION.

(1) The rite of circumcision, though practised by the Hebrews from an earlier epoch, was per-

¹ Thus, the division of the Hebrews into twelve tribes, alleged by some writers as analogous to the territorial divisions of Egypt, naturally resulted from the number of Jacob's children. The distinction between clean and unclean meats, was pre-Mosaic and patriarchal, reaching backward to the Deluge. Hence may also be explained the strong repugnance felt to *swine* among the Israelites as well as the Egyptians, and the feeling of contempt with which they both regarded swineherds. The Levitical hierarchy had, moreover, several points of close resemblance to the various orders

of Egyptian priests; yet most important differences are also traceable; for instance, in the perpetual exclusion of the Hebrew priesthood from all grants of territory. (Cf. Prichard, *Egypt. Mythol.* pp. 409 sq.) In this class of merely accidental correspondencies I am inclined to place the 'holy women' of the Israelites, a kind of nuns or female Nazarites, distinct from priestesses, but nevertheless devoted to ascetic modes of life (Ex. xxxviii. 8; 1 Sam. ii. 22): with whom may be compared the holy women of Egypt and Phœnicia (Herod. ii. 54, 56).

petuated in the ritual system of their legislator, and, as raised by him into a national institution, takes its place among the subjects handled in this chapter. Now that some such rite was also common in the land of Egypt, where Abraham himself had sojourned prior to its introduction into his own family, is definitely stated in a well-known passage of Herodotus¹. He there informs us that the custom was native with Egyptians and Ethiopians, as also with the Colchians, who, according to his version of the matter, were an old deposit of Egyptians reaching backward to the conquests of Sesostrius. He then adds that circumcision was derived from Egypt by the Syrians of Palestine and the Phœnicians. In the absence of all mention of the Jews, as well as of the Ishmaelites who, Abrahamic also in their origin, had practised the same rite, we may conjecture² that the information of Herodotus, which may have been derived exclusively from traders, was restricted to the *coast* of Syria. Still there is no reason for suspecting the general truth of the account, that centuries before the date of his travels some conformity in this respect existed between the Hebrews and Egyptians. The 'reproach of Egypt,' as adverted to by Joshua (v. 9), is capable of two or more interpretations; but if

CHAP.
II.

Was cir-
cumcision
exclusively
Hebrew?

¹ II. 104; see Diodor. I. 28, and the abundant literature on the whole subject in Winer, *Realwört.* s. v. 'Beschneidung.' Sir G. Wilkinson affirms (Rawlinson's *Herod.* Vol. II. p. 171) that the rite was common in Egypt itself 'at least as early as the 4th dynasty, and probably earlier, long before the birth of Abraham.'

² See Mr Blakesley's note on Herodotus, as above. The difficulty

connected with 1 Sam. xviii. 25, 2 Sam. i. 20, etc., where 'Philistines' are distinguished as the 'uncircumcised,' Mr Blakesley meets by remarking that 'subsequently to the time of Saul a great change took place in the population of the Philistine cities, and that a considerable Egyptian element [practising circumcision] had probably been introduced.'

CHAP.
II

taken to mean 'that which Egypt would herself have stigmatised', the phrase will intimate that as early as the period of the Exodus the lack of circumcision¹ had been held disreputable in Egypt; and although it may be now successfully contended, more especially from a profusion of extant mummies³, that the practice had been far from universal, its prevalence in the age of Moses may be urged with some show of reason.

Its existence in far-distant countries.

The remote antiquity of the practice is again suggested strongly, if not absolutely proved, by its existence far beyond the area both of Hebrew and Egyptian influence. Traces of it have been found not only in the Cushite race of Ethiopians proper, and in Troglodytes⁴ whose haunts were chiefly on

¹ See Rosenmüller, *in loc.*, who refers to Ezek. xvi. 57; xxxvi. 15; Ps. xxxix. 9, in illustration of the Hebrew phraseology. Yet other texts appear to justify the passive rendering, 'that which exposes Egypt to reproach,' viz. uncircumcision (cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 26), or else idolatry (cf. Ezek. xx. 7), with which the Hebrews had been previously infected. New difficulties arise from the examination of Jer. ix. 25, 26, where both the Hebrew and Vulgate (as expounded by St Jerome, *in loc.*) are quoted to prove that many persons in Egypt and Edom, as well as Ammonites and Moabites, *did* practise circumcision, though strangers to the true faith: cf. Ezek. xxxi. 18; xxxii. 32, 29, 24, 30.

² Cf. Ex. iv. 24 sq., which implies that, for some cause or other, the rite had been at first omitted, even in the household of Moses, although the obligation to administer it was known to Zipporah, his wife. Its subsequent suspension in the wilder-

ness appears to have rested altogether upon *moral* grounds; the people 'who obeyed not the voice of the Lord' were for a season placed in the condition of the excommunicated, and therefore were thrust back into the standing-ground of the unclean (cf. Josh. v. 5—7).

³ 'From the examination of the mummies it appears that the practice was very limited, not extending to one in fifty; but it must be remembered that a large proportion of these are not of very high antiquity.' Kenrick, I. 450.

⁴ Diodor. III. 32, who remarks that they acted *παράφρονας τοῖς Ἀγνοῦσι*, though it is not altogether improbable that the Troglodytes were of Arabian lineage, and might thus derive the practice from Ishmael. It is still not uncommon in Abyssinia (cf. Uhlemann, *Aegypt. Alt.* II. 257), but whether adopted from the heathen natives or the Judaizers of the Early Church is matter of dispute.

the confines of the Red Sea, but far away at the extremity of the African continent¹, among the distant isles of Oceanica², and even, there is reason for supposing, in the very heart of the New World³.

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Yet if phenomena like these transport us backward to a period long before the call of Abraham or the adoption of the usage in his household, there is nothing in the language of the sacred penman which can fairly be regarded as at variance with such a supposition. The peculiar terms, indeed, in which the ordinance of circumcision was prescribed to him at first (Gen. xvii. 10) would rather indicate that the idea itself was older and was not unknown to him. The elevation of an ancient symbol to the rank of a Divine ordinance exactly corresponded to the change effected in a second ancient rite,—the practice of lustration, where the element of water, naturally associable with ideas of purity, was chosen by our blessed Lord in His initiatory sacrament, to symbolise, and by the working of His Spirit to convey, the highest form of purification,—the remission of sins.

How related to the Abrahamic institution.

What then may be said to constitute the special and distinctive differences between the heathen and the Hebrew rite of circumcision? It is not, I think, unlikely that this usage was connected first of all with the idea of generative purity, and so of a transcendent fitness for religious service, and the

Specific differences between the Hebrew and all other rites.

¹ e. g. Dr Livingstone writes (pp. 146, 147): 'All the Bechuana and Caffre tribes south of the Zambesi practise circumcision (*boguera*), but the rites observed are carefully concealed.' He thinks, as there practised, it was 'only a sanitary and political measure,' and further suggests that, owing to the want of 'a

continuous chain of tribes practising the rite,' it 'can scarcely be traced, as is often done, to a Mahometan source' (p. 149). Prichard (*Researches*, III. 287) believes it 'a relic of ancient African customs,' of which the Egyptians also partook.

² Part III. P. 198, n. 2.

³ *Ibid.*

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higher culture of the intellect. As such it had continued to be prized in Egypt by the members of the hierarchy¹, even though neglected or disparaged by the bulk of the people; among whom, indeed, on losing its original significance, it came to be regarded merely as an ancient custom or a sanitary and prudential regulation². It might also in some districts be corrupted, with corruptions of religious thought, into a species of bloody offering³, or might even as a substitute for human sacrifices be administered in every case with the intention of propitiating an angry god, like Moloch or Huitzilopochtli. But whatever had become the heathen version of this symbol, no one will deny that when the Hebrew father circumcised the members of his household, he both acted with a definite purpose and was animated by a spirit thoroughly religious. There the rite was not to be administered, as once it was in Egypt, at the age of fourteen and upwards 'when reasons of health or purity might prompt it,' but as soon almost as the recipient of it was a sharer in the blessings of existence,—on the eighth day after birth. As such it formed a strictly *national* solemnity, embracing not the favoured classes of society to whom it gave admission to the higher forms of intellectual greatness, but extend-

¹ Origen distinctly affirms this (*in Ep. ad Roman.* Lib. II. c. 13; Opp. v. 138, 139, ed. Lommatszsch), adding that men of science were subjected to the rite of circumcision, and that no persons uncircumcised were allowed to study the sacerdotal or hieroglyphic characters.

² Cf. Herod. II. 37, and above, p. 107, n. 1.

³ Part III. p. 198, n. 2. Döllinger (*Heidenthum und Judenthum*,

p. 790) appears to have adopted this theory: 'Erinnert man sich, dass auch in Rom und bei den Galliern frühere Menschenopfer durch eine leichte Wunde, ein Ritzen der Haut und Vergiessen einiger Blutestropfen ersetzt wurden, so ist es wohl denkbar, dass auch die Beschneidung ein solcher stellvertretender Opfer-Ritus gewesen sei:' cf. Kurtz, *Gesch. des Alt. Bund.* I. 185.

ing always to the lowliest member of the Hebrew commonwealth. And corresponding to the freedom of its spirit and its equal operation was the grandeur of the end for which it was appointed. Like the rest of the Mosaic institute, that symbol was profoundly ethical. Translated into words, the meaning of it was 'Be ye holy, for I am holy.' 'The Lord appeared to Abraham, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect; and I will make my covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly' (Gen. xvii. 1, 2). The rite of circumcision, as the narrative proceeds to tell us, was the seal and 'token' of this covenant (ver. 11). Outward in the flesh, and so according with the sterner genius of the old œconomy, it imprinted on the mind of every Hebrew the peculiar closeness of his own relations to the pure and perfect God, and the necessity therein implied of fearing and of loving Him, and circumcising more and more 'the foreskin of the heart' (Deut. x. 12—16).

CHERUBIM.

(2) Another instance where it is imagined that the symbolism of heathen countries has been reproduced among the legal institutions is the figure of the cherubim, compared with the Egyptian sphinxes of the Pharaonic times. No question of this kind has been more frequently discussed, and few, it might be added, to so little profit. There is now indeed far less uncertainty than heretofore about the shape and meaning of the ancient sphinx. It was in Egypt of three kinds: 'the *andro-sphinx*, with the head of a man and the body of a lion; the *crio-sphinx*, with the head of a ram and the body

*Egyptian
sphinxes.*

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II.

of a lion; and the *hieraco-sphinx*, with the same body and the head of a hawk¹. The first of these, which from the nature of its composition is most capable of being brought into comparison with the Hebrew cherub, is now regarded as a symbol of the union, in a fabulous shape, of mental and of physical energy²; the wisdom and intelligence of the man, combining with the courage and the brute force of the lion. Where a sphinx was planted by the Old Egyptian in the neighbourhood of the throne, the special properties which it was meant to symbolise were all attributed to the king himself; but where, as still more frequently happened, the position was in front of some Egyptian temple, it was rather meant to celebrate a union, in the deity³ there worshipped, of the same exalted and commanding powers.

*Compound
symbols in
other coun-
tries.*

When we turn, however, to the Hebrew symbols which are often deemed in close analogy to this, and strive to ascertain their real form and meaning, it is most important to observe that such compounded representations had never during the historic period been exclusively Egyptian⁴.

¹ Wilkinson, 2nd ser. II. 200. This writer justly observes that the head of the human being in the first division is never feminine, much less virginal, as Bähr (*Symbolik*, I. 358) has incorrectly reasserted.

² Wilkinson, *Ibid.* Hengstenberg, *Die Bücher Moses und Aegypten*, p. 159.

³ This reference to a deity is denied by Wilkinson, who thinks that all sphinxes, wherever placed, were 'types or representatives of the king:' but the theological import of such at least as were placed before temples was known to Plutarch (*De Is. et Osir.* c. IX.), and is maintain-

able on other grounds: cf. Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, Vol. I. p. 633, on the Man-Lion and the Man-Bull, as symbols of two Babylonian divinities.

⁴ See the numerous examples of the contrary collected in Bähr, I. 357, 358, who declares with reference to the compound figures of ancient Egypt, that he cannot find a single instance possessing any true affinity to the Hebrew cherubs. The nearest approach to any actual resemblance; viz. a combination consisting of the heads of four creatures (a lion, a man, an ox, and an eagle) seems to be among the emblems of Hinduism (p. 352). Wilkinson, 2nd ser.

On the contrary, they seem to have abounded in all regions of the ancient world, in which the monuments of sacred art have been transmitted to our times. It has been stated, for example, that 'in the earliest Assyrian monuments, one of the most frequently met with is the eagle-headed human figure. Not only is it found in colossal proportions as sculptured upon the walls or guarding the portals of the chambers, but it is also constantly represented among the groups on the embroidered robes. In other cases, the head of the bird occurs united with the body of a lion, under which form it is the same as the Egyptian hieraco-sphinx¹.'

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II.

One definite parallel to representations of this kind has been suggested in the griffin of the Greek mythographers, which was avowedly an importation from some eastern system; but the specious theory, framed by Herder² for connecting griffins by a second link with cherubim of Holy Scripture, though revived from time to time by the more daring of philologers, is destitute of all

*The cherub
not related
to the
griffin.*

II. 275, was most reminded of the Hebrew cherubs and their position in the tabernacle, by two figures of the goddess *Thmei* (or Truth) overshadowing by their wings the sacred beetle of the Sun.

¹ Vaux, *Nineveh and Persepolis*, p. 32, Lond. 1850: cf. pp. 293, 294.

² See the ample refutation of it in Bähr, I. 350 sq. Dr Donaldson, *Christian Orthodoxy*, p. 354, has somewhat extended the dimensions of this theory by connecting the Greek *harp-ies*, 'which Homer designates as stormy winds,' and the Greek *Kerb-erus*, 'which barred the entrance to Hades,' with the sphinx

of Egypt, which, he says, 'watched over the sepulchres,' and the *כַּרְיֹן* of Holy Scripture, which he characterises, first, as 'the harpy or seizer,' and, then, by a transition hard to follow, as 'symbolical of the Divine presence,' and a 'sign of warning to forbid a rash or profane approach to the shrine of inaccessible sanctity' (p. 355). It may seem presumptuous to disbelieve or controvert the etymology of *cherub*, here suggested; but Dr Donaldson knows, as well as I do, that a multitude of other guesses, quite as plausible, have been in turn examined and rejected by Hebrew lexicographers.

CHAP.
II.*Functions
of the two
disimilar.*

internal probability as well as of historic basis. Cherubim, as they occur in representations of the Bible from its earliest chapters to the closing visions of St John, are *not* mere guards, or watchers, blocking the approach to some forbidden object. In the text (Gen. iii. 24), which more than others will at first sight favour such interpretation of their functions, it is not asserted that the cherubim were placed *outside* the garden; neither is it said that they were planted on that sacred soil to 'watch' it merely; for if 'watching' was in any sense ascribed to them, as well as to the sword-like flame, the word employed will shew that they were watchers only as the first man was a watcher; they were doing there what he had signally failed to do (ii. 15). And in like manner the position of those emblems in the Hebrew tabernacle had never been upon the threshold of the holiest place, nor even before the mercy-seat, but in immediate contact and connexion with the throne of God Himself (Exod. xxv. 18). A careful survey of these facts will be sufficient to repel the notion that the cherubim were emblems only of exclusive and prohibitory power; and if we seek, as we are bound, the fuller illustration of their form and import in the copious visions of Ezekiel and especially among the wonders of the great Apocalypse, it is evident that whatever may turn out to be their true relation to the sphinx, they differed from the griffin absolutely and entirely. Both indeed were composite in structure, though the figures which make up the symbol were unlike in the two cases: and with this mere shadow of approximation ceases all affinity whatever.

How then, following in the steps of Holy Scripture, may we characterise the Hebrew cherubim? Each cherub was a group of figures, or was rather one compounded figure, consisting of four parts. The leading or most prominent shape resembled a human being, while the rest were like some portions of the ox, the lion and the eagle. The whole emblem, it is true, might have been somewhat different at the different points of Hebrew history¹; but two or more of these distinctive elements had always been the recognised members of cherubic combinations. Now we gather from Ezekiel that the fundamental thought embodied in such emblems was the property of *life*: they were emphatically the 'living ones'; they represented, therefore, several of the noblest forms of creaturely existence, each excelling in its province, each contributing to the production of a group, in which the human form² predominated, and the four together constituting an ideal image of all animated nature.

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II.

Real nature of the cherubim.

So interpreted we readily understand not only their position in the sacred garden, but their office in the sanctuary of God on earth and also their proximity to God Himself in visions of the blessed. The planting of the cherub on the ground, which

How connected with man's redemption.

¹ Bähr, I. 314. Hengstenberg (as before, p. 162), who, differing from Bähr, argues in favour of the original connexion between the sphinx and cherub, is of opinion that in the time of Moses the cherubic emblem consisted of two members only, the man and the lion, and refers in proof that such a double representation was occasionally continued in far later times, to Ezek. xli. 18-20.

C. A. E. IV.

He urges also, from Exod. xxv. 20, that the Mosaic cherub had only *one* aspect.

² Ezek. i. 5, 13 sq.; x. 17. The LXX render ἰῶα, which is also the word made use of in the Apocalypse, iv. 6, and generally.

³ 'Out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man.' Ezek. i. 5.

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II.

man had once inherited but failed ere long to cherish for his best possession, was suggestive of the truth that he and all whose fortunes had been linked with his had still, in virtue of some gracious mystery, a part and interest in Eden. The appearance of the cherub in the holiest of all was further proof of such an interest; it prolonged the hopeful pledge afforded to the Hebrew by traditions of his forefathers; it told him that the representatives of man and of creation generally had still their place allotted to them on the mercy-seat of the Most High; and in the glowing scenes of the Apocalypse when Adam's family have re-assembled round the throne of God to sing the praises of the great Redeemer, the same mystic creatures shew the ardour which that anthem has excited in their bosoms, by a rapturous 'Amen' (Rev. v. 14).

*Relation to
the sphinx.*

Whatever, therefore, may be urged in proof of some external correspondency in the Mosaic age between the cherub as already known to members of the sacred family and the sphinx as sculptured in approaches to Egyptian temples, there can be no doubt that the two emblems were associated in those two systems with very different thoughts. The one might serve to symbolise the best conceptions which a pagan mind could form of properties possessed by favourite kings or by some nobler inmates of his crowded pantheon; while the other was designed to be a complex image of created nature in its highest, most ideal form, yet always bowing in distinct subordination to the great Creator, and as such ascribing 'glory and honour and thanks to Him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever' (Rev. iv. 9).

(3) It has again been frequently remarked that the division of the Hebrew sanctuary into a holy and most holy place was made to follow the Egyptian model; the idea in both those cases being that the special residence of the Divinity should form a kind of inner shrine, or adytum, secreted from the popular gaze by some mysterious curtain. Now the fact that the Egyptian temples *did* contain what was entitled a 'most holy region', as well as various courts conducting to it, is no longer open to dispute; yet with this solitary mark of outward correspondency, possessed in common by most other nations of the ancient world², the parallelism in question seems to be exhausted³. As the Hebrew sanctuary was one, in order to symbolise the absolute unity of God, so all arrangements there established had an eye to the surpassing purity and spirituality of His nature. There, as everywhere, the genius of the Hebrew system vindicated its true honour, as entirely and profoundly ethical. The migratory tent as well as the elaborate temple on Mount Moriah was a pledge to Israelites that God Himself, no mere abstraction, but a present, living, reigning God, had entered into fellowship with His elect, and though

Real import of the Hebrew sanctuary.

¹ Uhlemann, *Thoth*, p. 7; and above, p. 74.

² Bähr, I. 219.

³ I have already called attention to the seeming parallelism between the 'ark of the covenant' and the sacred chests, or boats, of heathen nations, while discussing a ritual peculiarity of the Mexicans (Part III. pp. 147, 148); and the same

remarks may be applied at once to the Egyptian ceremony entitled 'the procession of shrines,' and described at length by Wilkinson, 2nd ser. II. 271 sq. The few external resemblances will only serve to bring out more clearly the internal contradictions. Cf. Orcurti, *Catalogo Illustrato dei Monumenti Egizii* (Torino, 1852), pp. 91, 92.

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II.

the heaven and the heaven of heavens were His (Deut. x. 14), had condescended to develope their religious sentiment by tabernacling in the midst of them. 'I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God; and they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the Lord their God' (Exod. xxix. 45, 46). The sanctuary had thus for them the kind of meaning which the Incarnation now possesses for the storm-tost spirit of the Christian; it presented to them one fixed point amid the fluctuations of the universe: it was the index of God's kingdom upon earth; it brought the infinite within the limits of the finite, it was raised into the meeting-place of human and Divine, and so became the feeble prelude to the mightiest of all facts. And as the holy-place was that to which the Israelite had access by his sacerdotal representatives, and where through them he could perform his ministry in the sight of God, so in the holy of holies, whence they all were equally excluded, there was imaged out the truth that even for the best of Israelites the way into the inmost presence of Jehovah 'was not yet made manifest.' Veils and barriers intercepted their approach to Him, whose glory, shining forth between the cherubim, was high above the mystic covering of the Ark; yet the admission of one single priest with the appointed offerings on the Day of Atonement was sufficient indication to the Hebrew who was truly bent on finding out 'the wonders of the Law,' that the condemnatory witness there deposited in the Ark might still be silenced and averted altogether by some absolute

propitiation, symbolised in the arrangements of that annual solemnity. CHAP.
II.

It were superfluous to point out in detail how completely such ideas were absent from the goodliest temple of Mizraim, where the grovelling inmate of the holiest place was one or other of the sacred animals; and where the worship rendered by fanatic swarms of votaries was often no less gross and bestial than the object!

URIM AND THUMMIM.

(4) Greater confidence has sometimes been expressed by theorists on this subject as to the Egyptian origin of the mysterious symbol which the Hebrew commonly entitled the *Urim and Thummim*. We collect from Diodorus and other writers¹ that in Egypt the chief judge engaged in listening to the cases brought before him wore about his neck a chain of gold and precious stones to which had been attached a small image of *Thmei*, the goddess of truth or justice, and that when the depositions of the litigants were heard, his practice was to touch the successful person with the image in token of the truth or justness of his cause. The drift of this Egyptian symbol is immediately apparent. It impressed on the administrator of public justice² that impartiality ought always to preside

¹ See Wilkinson, 2nd ser. II. 28, and a fuller discussion of this point in Mr Tomkins's *Hulsean Essay*, (1850) pp. 80 sq. Hengstenberg argues for the identity of the two customs, while Mr Kenrick (II. 53, n. 1) seems to take the opposite view.

² Diodorus (I. 48) mentions as a common interpretation that the ἀρχι-

δικαστής, who appeared on the tomb of Osymandyas with closed eyes and with the figure of truth suspended from his neck, was bound πρὸς μύστην βλέπειν τὴν ἀλήθειαν: cf. Ælian, XIV. 34. Hengstenberg, *Die Bücher Mose's und Ägypten*, p. 156, is almost alone in maintaining that the primitive signification of this

Egyptian contrast.

Nature of the alleged parallelism.

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II.

at his decisions, and the same idea of strict integrity was further hinted by the fact that Truth herself was pictured with closed eyes, and that the judges, in funereal rituals found at Thebes, were also represented 'without hands.' There is, however, far greater difficulty in ascertaining the precise complexion of the Hebrew usage which is frequently compared with this. The narrative respecting the institution of it will be found in Exod. xxviii. 30: 'And thou shalt put in the breast-plate¹ of judgment [*or*, righteousness], the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.' We read again (Numb. xxvii. 21) that on the designation of Joshua to the leadership which had been previously enjoyed by Moses: 'He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask [*counsel*] for him, after the judgment of Urim before the Lord;' implying that the wonderful emblems here connected with the breast-plate of the high-priest were meant, as being one with it, to serve the purpose of an oracle, whatever

emblem was rather 'promissory' than didactic, pointing to some special presence and inspiration of the goddess of Truth in the Egyptian courts of justice. He refers in illustration to Deut. xxxiii. 8, 9.

¹ It has been urged (for example, by Mr Tomkins, p. 83), as an admissible rendering of the Hebrew אֲבִי־חַיִּים וְאֲבִי־מֵתִים that 'these two mysterious names (Urim and Thummim) were *no visible part of it* (the breast-plate) *at all*, but attributes assigned to it emblematical of high moral

qualities.' Yet as precisely the same phrase occurs in Exod. xxv. 16, 21, where the allusion is to the placing of the two Tables within the ark, we can hardly doubt that the Authorised Version is here correct, and that the Urim and Thummim were something superadded, and materially separable from the breast-plate: cf. Bähr, II. 108, 109. In Lev. viii. 8, it is said expressly, 'And he put the breast-plate upon him; also he put in the breast-plate the Urim and the Thummim.'

be the right interpretation of the method in which responses were detected and delivered (cf. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6). CHAP.
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The intimations, therefore, of a common parentage for the Egyptian and the Hebrew symbols, are restricted chiefly to the circumstance that both may be described as solemn badges, and that some *judicial* characteristics are attributed to their possessors in the two cases respectively. The chief judge, among his other decorations, wore about his neck the chain of office, with a precious seal, or effigy of truth, suspended from it: the chief priest, in asking guidance from Jehovah, wore the breastplate of righteousness, containing in the precious stones of which it was composed an emblem of collective Israel; and armed with it he was directed to 'go in unto the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually.' But the statement of this semblance of external approximation, or rather of remote affinity in the *uses* of the two solemn symbols, is enough to make us thoroughly conscious of their general dissimilitude. The Aaronic breastplate, for example, was not worn in any court of human judicature; it had no reference to the ordinary business of the individual Hebrew, but to special difficulties connected with the fortunes of the whole sacred corporation; neither was it meant to quicken in the spirit of the wearer a conviction of his personal frailty, or his need of more than ordinary watchfulness in executing his high office. *Points of
difference.*

Whence, then, grew the prevalent notion that some very close affinity existed between the emblems now in question? It is clearly traceable to *Thummim
and Thmei.*

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II.

the rendering, which had been adopted in the Septuagint¹, of the expression *Thummim*. That Hebrew word has there been made equivalent to 'Truth' (ἀλήθεια), and as the great Egyptian goddess, who presided over the courts of law, and aided the decisions of Osiris in the under-world, had also borne the name of Truth (*Thmei*), it was conjectured that the traces of a radical connexion between *Thmei* and *Thummim*, or in other words between the Hebrew and Egyptian customs, had been half-unconsciously attested by the Alexandrine version of the Pentateuch. But this conjecture has been seriously weakened, if not overthrown entirely, by other considerations: first, that 'Thummim' is a regular Hebrew form, grammatically unconnected with the Coptic *Thmei*; secondly, that in rendering 'Thummim' into Greek, the Seventy have departed from the letter of the Hebrew text and so confounded qualities which really differ; and thirdly, that the error introduced by them may probably have had its origin, like others of the same description, in their strong Egyptian bias.

Probable
meaning of
the Hebrew
symbol.

I may add that when the glorious properties of light and of perfection had been thus ascribed em-

¹ Urim (אֲרִימִם) is rendered δῆ-
λωσις in LXX, and (more literally)
φωτισμοί in Aquila. The plural
form is best explained as a plur.
majest., so that it points to the idea
of *Divine* illumination. The same
account must be given of the plural
form in Thummim (תֻּמִּימִם) which
the LXX, and Philo after them,
have rendered ἀλήθεια, and Aquila
(more literally) τελειώσεις. Wilkin-
son, who seems to accept the ren-

dering of the LXX, thinks that the
'dual or plural word' (Thummim)
corresponds to the Egyptian notion
of the 'two truths,' (cf. above, p.
85), or two similar figures, marking
a double capacity of the goddess
(2nd ser. II. 28, 29). He also gives
a drawing of a breast-plate, where
both Ra (the Sun) and Thmei are
represented together; which is doubt-
less a still closer parallel to 'Lights'
and 'Perfections.'

phatically to the Hebrew breast-plate by affixing to it the significant symbols of the Urim and Thummim, the high-priest was made to bear the whole of the 'oracular apparatus' with him as 'a memorial before the Lord.' If, therefore, in accordance with some other texts of Holy Scripture the inserted emblems may be construed¹ as uniting into one the highest moral qualities ascribable to God Himself, it is no idle fancy to conclude that Aaron so adorned and bearing on his heart the names of the children of Israel, was to them a vivid image of the law of mediation (cf. Numb. xvi. 47, 48), and to us a luminous shadow of '*the Mediator between God and man*,' who having in the fulness of the times obtained a more excellent ministry, has gathered up into Himself the various functions of the mediatorial office.

THE RED HEIFER.

(5) In the law prescribed through Moses, (Numb. xix.) for the cleansing of those Hebrews who had been defiled by touching a dead body, there is special mention of the colour of the victim to be offered up on such occasion; that its ashes, mingled with the lustral water, might conduce to the removal of the disability contracted, and so 'sanctify to the purifying of the flesh' (Heb. ix. 13). The victim was to be a *red* cow or heifer, without spot; and as no other valid reason seemed to be suggested² for the naming of one definite colour,

Why the colour was specifically red.

¹ See this point well drawn out in Mr Tomkins's Essay (as above) pp. 84 sq.

² Maimonides wrote a special treatise *De Vacca rufa*, and the subject

has been handled with singular frequency in all ages; yet the Hebrew doctors admit that even Solomon, who knew most other things, was in ignorance respecting the red heifer.

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fresh recourse was had by certain writers to the ancient usages of Egypt in the hope of thence extracting the desired elucidation. We have noted in the last chapter¹ that red was the Typhonic colour, and therefore if full credit may be given to the account of Plutarch, the Egyptians 'never sacrificed any but perfectly red cattle.' It is plain, however, that if any foreign reference was intended, the idea of counteracting², not of copying the Egyptian custom is involved in the selection by the Hebrews of a cow or heifer in the place of the more usual ox (Lev. iv. 14); since, both those animals, as we have seen already³, were invested with peculiar sacredness throughout the Valley of the Nile. The truth will probably turn out to be, that the adoption of the red colour in both cases corresponded only because of its inherent fitness to express the thought which it was made to symbolise in each community. It was the colour of *blood*⁴; and while in Egypt this idea was readily connected with the deadly, scathing, sanguinary powers of Typhon, it became in the more ethical system of the Hebrews a remembrancer of moral evil flowing out into its penal consequences, or an image of unpardoned sin (cf. Is. i. 15, 18).

¹ Above, p. 77.

² This view is strongly urged by Spencer, whose work contains a very full discussion *De Vitula rufa Deo immolanda*; but Hengstenberg, as before, p. 182, while conceding the partial truth involved in it, has suggested that the offering was feminine to make it accord more fully with the common Hebrew word for sin, which is also of the feminine gender.

³ Above, p. 76.

⁴ Hengstenberg, *Ibid.* p. 188. Bähr adopts a different view: 'Das Thier war...Antidotum gegen den Tod und die Todesgemeinschaft, und musste eben darum auf den Begriff Leben hinweisen; das geschah nun schon durch sein Geschlecht, noch mehr und bestimmter aber durch sein Aussehen, es trug die Lebensfarbe,' (ii. 500).

THE SCAPE-GOAT.

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II.

(6) A further instance of supposed affinity to the Egyptian ritual is discovered in the ceremonies appointed for the Hebrew nation on the greatest of their annual celebrations,—the Day of Atonement (Lev. xvi). It is there provided that the high-priest of Israel, after making atonement for himself and for his house, shall take two goats, and when they had been solemnly presented shall cast lots upon them; ‘one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scape-goat [*or*, Azazel]. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord’s lot fell, and offer him for a sin-offering: but the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scape-goat [*or*, on which Azazel’s lot fell], shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scape-goat [*or*, to Azazel] into the wilderness.’ And in the following verses of the same chapter, where the ceremony in question is minutely sketched, we gather the additional information, that the high-priest was to ‘lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.’

The practice of transferring, emblematically, the sins of the offerer to the innocent victim chosen by him as their representative had doubtless its analogy¹ among the Old Egyptians, who, in some at

*Minor
points of
resem-
blance.*

¹ Herod. II. 39; Kenrick, I. 443, evidence of the sculptures that it was no more than occasional and exceptional.
444. Wilkinson, referring to this practice, argues from the negative

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least of their oblations, prayed over the head of the victim that evils then impending might be all averted upon it; but there is no necessity whatever for supposing that a practice so graphic and so natural in itself was specially Egyptian, and not rather as primeval as the earliest dawn of the idea which prompted substitutionary offerings.

*Why an
explanation
is sought
in Egypt.*

It is urged, however, that apart from any minor proofs of correspondency, the whole conception of the *two* goats as there appointed, and the seeming dualism connected with their mode of treatment, indicate still deeper tinges of Egyptian influence¹. On minute inquiry this interpretation of the Hebrew ceremonial will be found to rest on the assumption that *Azazel* in the passage just recited is another name for Satan, and therefore that the final driving of the goat into the desert is, in Hebrew phraseology, a solemn renunciation of the powers of darkness, in the name of the whole reconciled community of Israel; or, in accordance with Egyptian forms of speech, a sending back of evil to the favourite haunts of its Typhonic author.

*Who or
what was
Azazel?*

Now the meaning of the word *Azazel* is confessedly involved in very great obscurity². One ancient derivation, as attested by the version of the Seventy (*ἀποπομπαῖος*), makes the name equivalent to scape-goat ('*hircus emissarius*'); but how, it was demanded, passing by some other dis-

¹ Spencer, II. 450sq. has advocated this view in his usual manner, contending that while the Hebrew practice of sending away the second goat partly recognised the heathen theory of sacrifice, the whole rite was calculated to impress the truth that sin-offerings are due to God

only, while the evil spirit, which he found in *Azazel*, was to be regarded as unclean, and as an object of abhorrence: cf. Bähr's criticism of these ideas, II. 693-695.

² See the different interpretations of it in Winer, *Realwört.* s. v.

putable matters, could the goat as mentioned in v. 10 be sent *to* or *for* Azazel, if Azazel were the goat itself? The force of this consideration led directly to the notion that Azazel meant either a person or a place; and as the parallelisms between some incidents, relating to Jehovah and to it, appeared in favour of the *personal* rendering, the alleged connexion of the word with evil spirits, or with Satan, came at length to be more generally accepted. Azazel was explained¹ as equal to 'the segregated,' 'the apostate,' 'the unclean;' and although the title is not found elsewhere in Holy Scripture², nor the doctrine thus suggested capable at first sight of reduction into harmony³ with its

¹ Thus Hengstenberg, as before, p. 166, note; who revives the derivation of Bochart, according to whom the root of Azazel is $\text{עזל} = \text{ערל} =$ 'semovit,' 'dimovit,' &c. Ewald, who formerly espoused the Satanic theory in reference to *Azazel*, has of late years explained the word to mean 'das Unreine, Unheilige (eigentlich das Getrennte, Verabscheute), die Sünde' (*Ibid.* p. 176); but is there not something very harsh and unintelligible in saying, as v. 10 would then be made to say, that the second goat was sent forth as its destination *to sin*, or unholiness? On the contrary, the relation in which *Satan* here stands to the desert has some analogies in Matt. xii. 43, Luke viii. 29, Rev. xviii. 2.

² *Azazel* and *Azel* were, however, quite familiar to the later Jews in the sense of 'evil spirit' or 'fallen angel' (see Eisenmenger, *Entdecktes Judenthum*, II. 155); and from them, perhaps, the word was handed over to Mohammadans.

³ Bähr, it must be acknowledged,

has stated his objections to this view with very great ability. After urging that the vindication of the Divine Unity was the leading, ever-prominent, aim of the Mosaic system, he adds: 'Offenbar würde aber der so strenge Mos. Monotheismus gänzlich aus seiner Konsequenz fallen, wenn er an dem heiligsten und wichtigsten Festtag, bei einer religiösen Feierlichkeit, in der der ganze Cultus kulminirt, den Teufel so neben Jehova gestellt hätte, wie es nach dieser Deutung v. 8-10 der Fall wäre' (II. 687). He forgets, however, such revelations as those contained in Gen. iii., and still more in Zech. iii., which latter passage also brings together, in the closest juxtaposition, Jehovah, Satan, and the high-priest. Bähr's own solution of the difficulty is to derive Azazel, as above, from עזל , and to render 'zu völliger Hinwegschaffung' (II. 668), but in attempting to construe the entire passage on this hypothesis, the difficulties appear to be only multiplied.

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II.Relation of
Azazel to
Jehovah.

severe monotheism, this bold interpretation of the chapter of Leviticus is on the whole perhaps more justifiable than any other which has been proposed.

If, therefore, the identity of Satan and Azazel be conceded, what is here revealed as to the true relation of Satan to Jehovah? How shall we explain the casting of lots upon the two goats, and the devotion of the second to the powers of darkness? That no actual sacrifice to Satan *could* have been intended by the Hebrew ceremony, we may gather most conclusively from the next chapter of Leviticus (xvii. 7), where all offerings made to demons are strongly interdicted. Nor will such a startling version of this incident be needed when the passage has been duly weighed. The *two* goats, it will be seen, were equally chosen to assist in the performance of the one sin-offering; and as both were solemnly presented to Jehovah at the door of the tabernacle, both were recognised by priest and people for His special property. He it was who guided the lot by which the one was destined to be offered, and the other sent unoffered and alive into the dreary desert. It is also most observable that the goat which was symbolically destined to bear away the *pardoned* sins of Israel, and so to bury them out of sight, had been already 'presented alive before the Lord,' and *in idea* had been offered like the other goat 'to make atonement with him' (v. 10); so that the duality of the offering was most probably ordained to represent two different aspects, or to carry on two separate stages, of the same remedial process'; one of the twin victims dying in the usual manner, and the

¹ Hengstenberg, as before, p. 171.

second being spared to shew the Hebrews in a striking figure, that iniquities remitted by Jehovah on the Day of Atonement were for ever hidden from their eyes,—remanded to the sphere of the unclean Azazel, or the ‘land not inhabited’ (v. 22). The most important truths, however, which the vivid ritual of that grand solemnity had served to inculcate, were first and chiefly the remissibility of human sin, and secondly the consequent call for its entire renunciation: and as truths like these were lying at the core of the Mosaic system, it alone of all religions had its Day of Atonement.

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§ 2. *Doctrinal Contrasts.*

On passing forward from this necessarily brief examination of particular features, which are said to characterise alike the Hebrew and Egyptian rituals, we shall find that the alleged resemblances which meet us on the surface are succeeded by a contrast far more absolute and unmistakeable. ‘With respect to theology,’ it is remarked by one¹ who proved himself as quick as others in discovering indications of ritual sympathy, ‘with respect to theology, no two systems can be more directly opposed to each other than the Mosaic doctrine was to that of the Egyptians.’ If resemblance to the latter *must* be sought among contiguous nations of the ancient world, there is no question, after what has been advanced in the preceding chapter, that the country whither we should bend our footsteps is Phœnicia², or the primitive land of Canaan. Yet as every fundamental tenet of

No dogmatic parallels between the Egyptians and the Hebrews.

¹ Prichard, *Egypt. Mythol.* p. 406.

² Above, pp. 50-54.

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the Hebrew had been always diametrically at variance¹ with the tenets of his Canaanitish neighbours, it will follow that so long as he was true to his own principles, he stood in no more friendly attitude to the theology of Egypt. I shall make this point more clearly manifest by choosing one or two examples, where it might have been presumed that we should trace, if not the positive marks of friendly interchange, at least the general vestiges of common ancestry.

*Hebrew
monotheism
and Egyptian
polytheism.*

(1) Now both in Egypt and Phœnicia, during the historic period, we shall look almost in vain for recognitions² of the power and presence of one only God, the spiritual Principle of the universe, distinct from all material forms, and guiding by His legislative will the life and final destiny of all creation. Both countries, it is true, had long retained some glimpses of this grand idea in their knowledge, and some echoes of it, broken and confused by human passions, are still audible amid their wild ejaculations to Baal and Osiris, or are lurking here and there in epithets, by which they thought to honour their great female gods, as Neith or Astarte; but practically a belief in the Supreme Intelligence was disappearing from the earth, when Abraham received his summons from 'the God of glory' to set forth upon the wondrous pilgrimage which brought him as a witness for the truth delivered to his fathers from the eastern bank of the Euphrates. There his family were lapsing with

¹ Part I. pp. 90 sq.

² Kenrick, speaking on this point (I. 438) goes further still, and while admitting that the highest order of monotheism was 'the clear doctrine

of the Hebrew Scriptures,' urges that it cannot be traced in any pagan speculations older than the school of Anaxagoras.

the multitude and 'serving other gods' (Josh. xxiv. 2). They also, peradventure, learned to gaze upon the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and their heart was secretly enticed and their mouth kissed their hand (cf. Job xxxi. 26, 27). And when descendants of the patriarch were similarly 'called' out of Egypt, their high mission was connected with the spread and conservation of the same great verity. The challenge which struck terror into their idolatrous enslavers was a proclamation of the sovereignty of God: 'Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord:' exactly as in later ages, one of the most haughty of the Pharaohs, glorying in the vast profusion of his foreign conquests and presuming on his godlike¹ strength, was doomed by the chastising breath of the Omnipotent, to utter and immediate ruin: 'The land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste, and they shall know that I am the Lord; because he hath said, The river is mine and I have made it' (Ezek. xxix. 9).

No account can here be taken of the 'esoteric' doctrines, which are said to have been handed down in Egypt by the help of her more sacred 'mysteries.' I speak of the religious creed of the Egyptian, either as inscribed upon his public monuments, or as recorded in funereal papyri of the many, or expounded by the treatise of an honest advocate like Plutarch; not as it was represented to us in the transcendental speculations of the Neo-Platonists, who breathing the fresh atmosphere of Christianity had often borrowed all their choicer and more spiritual ideas from the Gospel they were

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The popular creed of Egypt.

¹ Cf. Herod. II. 169.

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striving to uproot. That popular creed of Egypt, we have seen already, was in substance nothing higher than a deification of the various energies of nature; and in form was one of the least spiritual of the old polytheisms. 'Worship was paid in its turn to almost every object that revolves in the heavens, and to every creature which is possessed of locomotive powers on the earth¹.'

*Character
of Hebrew
mono-
theism ;*

What contrast, therefore, could be greater than the pure and absolute monotheism instilled into the mind of all the Hebrews? Far from being a mere sublimation of the pagan system, it was based throughout on the most opposite conceptions; it was penetrated by another spirit. God in it was everywhere revealed and worshipped as the one invisible Creator and Sustainer, as the only supra-mundane spirituality. I subjoin a single passage from the Pentateuch, in proof of this assertion; and the passage, beautiful and touching in itself, is worthy of particular notice here, because it furnishes the most explicit condemnation not of stellar worship merely, which was shared by other Gentile nations both of East and West, but also of the vile zoolatry which flourished with portentous rankness on the soil of ancient Egypt:

'Take ye, therefore, good heed unto yourselves (for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire) lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth: and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and

¹ Prichard, as before, p. 407.

when thou seest the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven. But the Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto Him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day' (Deut. iv. 15—20).

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But God as represented to us in the Hebrew Scriptures has not only been invested with an absolute mastery in all the realms of physical creation, which is therefore said to constitute 'His robe of glory' and to be 'expended in His service.' The few verses just recited lead at once to the idea of still more God-like characteristics. The Jehovah of the Hebrews is holiness itself. He is no expression fabricated by philosophy to denote the aggregate of all mechanical forces, active in the different provinces of nature; but the living, personal, holy God: and with a view to the diffusion of His holiness on earth, He chooses a peculiar people, who become the favoured nursery of religious truth, until endued with power from on high, the germs of life and godliness deposited with them, may fructify in every land and issue in the universal 'healing of the nations.' And the soul of the Mosaic system, which was meant to act as one of the more elementary exponents of God's will, is eminently ethical. It ever deals with man as with a free and strictly moral agent. Passing over all the speculative riddles, which perplexed the intellect or charmed the fancy of the Old Egyptian sages, it proclaims that God above us is our very King and Father and as such constrains us to obey Him. Its grand purpose is, in other words, to cultivate the human *will*, to draw it into harmony

*profoundly
ethical.*

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with the Divine; and hence the key to all the homeliest of the Hebrew symbols will be found in the magnificent inscription: 'Holiness unto the Lord.' Here also I extract one single passage from the Pentateuch, to shew that all the ethical system of the ancient Hebrews was erected on their firm belief in the immaculate holiness of God, that holiness attracting to itself the homage, love, and adoration of a free and grateful people:

'And now, O Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul; to keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked. For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; Him shalt thou serve, and to Him shalt thou cleave, and swear by His name. He is thy praise, and He is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen. Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude' (Deut. x. 12—22).

*The moral
sensitivity
of the He-
brew;*

(2) In such a system of religion, where the spotless character of God Himself and the original goodness of the world which He had called into existence, are beheld in their most perfect contrast to all that which had *become* evil, sin is in the

same proportion a profound reality¹. Grounded in that system on the moral freedom of the creature, it attains its true importance; it is recognised as flowing from perverted wills of personal beings, or rather every act of disobedience is the absolute refusal of the human will to stand in a receptive, creaturely, relation to the Author and the Giver of all good. The fruit of this conviction had been ever manifested by the Hebrew; on the one side, in his abject self-renunciation and the frequent bitterness of his repentance; on the other, in his trembling hope of ultimate forgiveness. There is no period in the history of his race², how dark soever be the clouds that menace the theocracy, how keen soever his own sense of personal shortcomings, when he ceases to take refuge in the thought, that in some latter day 'a fountain shall be opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness' (Zech. iii. 1). The feeling of imperfect reconciliation in the present makes him yearn more deeply for the 'times of refreshing' and the bringing-in of true atonement.

But in Egypt we discover few, if any, traces of a similar aspiration. There the want of clear con-ceptions with regard to the surpassing holiness of God was followed by comparative deadness of the moral intuitions. Sin was losing its inherent turpitude, because the standard of integrity, which should have been the holy character of God Himself, was lowered with the gradual obscuration of that character. Most true it is that sacrifices had

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¹ Cf. Hävernick, *Introd. to the Pentateuch*, p. 100.

² Part I. pp. 136 sq.

*contrasted
with the
moral dul-
ness of the
Egyptian.*

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continued to be offered on the altars of the Old Egyptian, and that some at least of these oblations corresponded in their outward form and import to sin-offerings of the Hebrew; but we gather no less clearly from the Rituals of the Dead and from abundant disavowals of the spirits for whose benefit those Rituals were compiled, that the prevailing consciousness of guilt was very superficial: man was gradually arriving at the thought that while obedience on the one side was no arduous or impracticable task, all disobedience would *inevitably* issue in the transmigration of the erring spirit; and the offerings to the gods must, therefore, have degenerated into mere routine, instead of quickening the perception of demerit, or of leading up the soul to God in acts of genuine self-devotion. The indifference of the Old Egyptian to this deeper view of sacrifice as well as the unspiritual tone pervading all his moral precepts, may remind us of the frigid self-complacency which we have witnessed in the temper of the ancient China-man. We cannot say that it was merely the outsidedness of ritual worship, or the legal pressure by which it was enforced, wherein those nations differed so completely from the Israelite; he also in accordance with the *literal* genius of the old œconomy, was required to fix his eye upon the *body* as well as on the soul of his religion: the chief difference had consisted rather in the clearness of the spiritual insight, which enabled all the members of the sacred family to perceive the true relation even of the poorest of their ritual actions to the holy will of God, by whom they were commanded.

Man's relationship to

Their belief in such relationship to that exalted

Being had again been vivified by what they knew of their own lofty origin. They were created in the image of God; in that connexion therefore they could see the basis both of present growth in habits of obedience, and of restoration, through some mediatorial system, to the likeness which they felt to be most grievously impaired. But this conviction of man's primal dignity had well-nigh faded from the sensuous spirit of the Old Egyptian. He could dream of dynasties of gods who occupied the earth anterior to his own creation; yet the human sovereigns he believed could never spring from such; the natures of the two had no points of contact, or the fortunes of the two could not be linked together; and accordingly the annals of the human period in Egyptian history open, it has been remarked¹, with kings of purely human lineage, and contain no reminiscence of primeval virtues or of times when God and man were fully reconciled. And corresponding to this lack of faith in the harmonious meeting of the human and Divine is the remarkable absence from the Old Egyptian creed of the idea of incarnation. There was no reluctance, it is true, to welcome the chief gods as dwelling in the bestial Apis or in other sacred animals², just as in the earlier *avatáras* of the

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*God not
recognised
in Egypt.*

*Bestial in-
carnations.*

¹ Lepsius, *Chronol.* pp. 26, 27, who also urges with more or less propriety: 'Hier ist kein inniges Wechselverhältniss zwischen Gott und den Menschen, wie im Alten Testamente, kein Herabzaubern Olympischer Götter durch Dichter und Künstler unter die Heroen eines jugendlichen Volkes, wie das der Griechen, noch auch nur ein zwit-

terhaftes Gemisch von menschlichen und dämonischen Gestalten einer trüben Phantasie, wie bei den Babyloniern und Chinesen:' cf. Herod. II. 142.

² Wilkinson, who mentions it as a merit of the Old Egyptians that they did not *humanise* their gods, has added (2nd ser. I. 176) that 'their fault was rather the elevation

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II.*Horus, no
mediator.*

Bráhmaṇ, Vishnú is beheld descending to the abject level of the fish, the boar, the tortoise: but in Egypt we shall find no counterpart of the exalted Krishnía, stooping for a season to the semblance of a human body and the mean 'condition of the threefold qualities,' that he may help in the uplifting of mankind in general or reveal some method of escape from the necessity of repeated births. The only faint approximation to this thought of sympathy with human kind is traced in periodic conflicts of the irresistible Horus with the scorching blasts of Typhon; yet while all advantages derived to man from such encounters are entirely physical, Horus also acts throughout as an unmixed divinity; he never stands invested with a human form in order to become the champion of the human species. Hence, indeed, it is that when the disembodied spirit of the Old Egyptian fights her way as far as the tribunal of Osiris, she has there no mediator and redeemer; and although she has the prospect of escaping and of floating with the glorious sun-god in celestial regions, it is only after she makes good her claim, as in some earthly court of justice, to the sentence of deserved acquittal.

*Doctrine of
a future
life;*

(3) But is there not one point,—the doctrine of a future life,—in which the creed of Egypt was confessedly superior to the teaching of the Books of Moses? This has often been asserted; and instead of pausing to appropriate the admission as

of animals and emblems to the rank of deities.' The heroes (*ἡμῶν*) of the old Egyptians were consequently not demigods in the Greek sense (*i. e.* having one divine parent) but

gods of an inferior rank: yet in the age of Manetho there was a disposition (Kenrick, I. 352, II. 92) to Hellenise on these points.

an argument in favour of the independence of the Hebrew system, I proceed to ascertain how far the excellence ascribed to Egypt was possessed of real value. Now in seeking a true answer to the question, we should bear in mind that almost every tribe of man, wherever scattered or however brutalised, has had distinct conceptions of a life beyond the present; and the vividness with which such feelings are expressed is sometimes in inverse proportion to the intellectual culture of the people, —greatest in the savage, least in the philosopher. The Chayma, or the Esquimaux, the unimaginative Papuan, or the wildest rover in the forests of Central Africa, has never doubted that the spirits of departed ancestors still linger near the place of sepulture, retained in close connexion with the body they had once enlivened and subsisting more or less upon the offerings made by the survivors. It need scarcely, therefore, be esteemed a matter of surprise, if the idea of an ulterior stage in man's existence, stretching far beyond the term of natural life, was quite familiar to the Old Egyptian. Such idea was but a primary intuition which belonged to him as *man*. Yet, as this doctrine in most regions had existed side by side with every phase of devil-worship, and without involving any definite notion either of a moral order or a moral Governor of the world, the simple fact of its existence in the Valley of the Nile can furnish no legitimate proof of spiritual elevation¹. Nor on analysing the

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*universally
diffused:*

*not necessarily
connected with
sublime
ideas of
God.*

¹ It is interesting to observe that De Wette, Vatke and others (quoted by Hengstenberg, *Dissertations*, &c. II. 460, 461) have begun to acknowledge that an entire silence respect-

ing the doctrine of immortality may belong to a higher point of view than the belief in immortality where it exists only in this crude, unspiritual, state. Such concessions un-

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II.*The
Egyptian
dogma.*

accounts of the Egyptian dogma, as presented to us by its warm admirers, are we justified in treating it as something either special or abnormal. The Egyptian seems to have imagined, when he introduced the custom of embalming, that the progress of death itself might finally be arrested and the past condition of the man be closely imitated in all future time; and when with this idea of simple prolongation, and the offerings to the dead as prompted by it, was connected the more ethical doctrine of a future judgment, for the grosser crimes which man had perpetrated in his previous life-time, the acquitted spirit, freed at length from the necessity of migrating to other animals, attained no higher destination than was commonly awarded to her by the wild tribes of America¹; her heaven was the resplendent sun himself, conceived of, it may be, as personal, but certainly as undistinguished from the centre of physical illumination.

*Not sanctioned in
the Bible.*

Now, I grant, that these conceptions of futurity have no existence in the Books of Moses. They are foreign to the genius of revealed religion², and accordingly when urged in a malignant spirit by the later Hebrew sceptics they were all repudiated by our blessed Lord Himself as proving ignorance

determine the cavils of the older race of Deists, who attempted to degrade the Mosaic religion below all forms of heathenism whatever.

¹ Part III. pp. 129, 130.

² It has been reserved for Mr D. I. Heath to discover (*Exodus Papyri*, p. 203) that 'with respect to the great subject of man's futurity, our present views in Europe are identical in principle, though

not in detail, with those which were held by the *actual opponents* of Moses'! The true doctrine, according to Mr Heath, (and here, he avers, is 'the one really distinguishing feature of Christianity') consists in proclaiming 'the human resurrection of each human being to a human kingdom of mutual human remission of sins'! (p. 103).

‘of the Scriptures and the power of God’ (Matt. xxii. 29). He told the captious Sadducee how some conditions and relations of the present life would *not* be simply and at once transferred into the future stage of being: just as the Apostle in discussing the objections of Hellenic sophists has proceeded to throw further light upon the mystery of our constitution and has taught us how the resurrection-body will be very different from a bare resuscitation of the body once committed to the ground. ‘It is sown a natural, it is raised a spiritual body’ (1 Cor. xv. 44).

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Part, indeed, of the transcendant excellence of Christianity, as compared not only with all heathen systems, but with Hebraism itself, consisted in the deep reality which it alone has given to *both* worlds. It never leads man to disparage his position and neglect his duties here, by preaching that the visible world is empty and illusive. Neither does it fashion for him a new sphere of being, modelled on the present life and reproducing all his animal enjoyments. Neither does it, in the third place, so restrain the human soul within the limits of the mundane as to shade off many a motive to exertion which is furnished by our clearer knowledge of the things invisible. The Gospel has brought life and immortality *to light*; and blessedness, as there revealed, is both the prolongation and transfiguration of our present blessedness. How just soever be the statement that the germ of man’s future self is lying in his present self, the ripening and unfolding of that germ so far exceeds our comprehension that we measure it only by reflecting on the way in which the Gospel has in fact transcended the best

*Christian
doctrine of
a future
life:*

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based on
the revealed
idea of
God.

visions of the old œconomy, or by noting how the Pattern-Man Himself received unspeakable accessions to His human dignity when, rising from the lowliness of earth, He was 'crowned with glory and honour.' But as life with Christ in glory must have always for its precondition the accordance and assimilation of the human will to God's, the training of that will must also be the first necessity in the education of mankind. 'To walk *with God*' is that which ever constitutes the basis of translation to God (Gen. v. 24). The true value, therefore, of belief in immortality arises from the ethical spirit of the system upon which it is engrafted, and the nature of the Person in whom it has subsistence. Where that Person is the living, loving and Almighty God, there is revealed in every glimpse of His exalted character a strong assurance of continuous being¹ to His genuine worshippers. As many as believe that God truly is, believe that He is also 'a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him.' They *must* repose their confidence in Him for present and for future. Unto such He never can have been 'the God of the dead, but of the living.'

Now it was the primary aim of the religion of

¹ 'That the Sadducees did not recognise this [the almightiness of God], our Lord marks as the root of their unbelief in the resurrection. In the theology of the Pentateuch this hindrance is fully overcome. He who created the world out of nothing—for whom nothing is too wonderful—death cannot obstruct Him, if He wills to preserve the soul. But in the theology of the Pentateuch, His will is pledged

equally with His power. The God of the Pentateuch is love; He who reveals Himself so full of grace to His people, and enters into the most intimate communion with them, in doing so declares that He will preserve them to eternal life. To this foundation of the doctrine of the resurrection in the Pentateuch our Lord Himself refers (Matt. xxii. 31, 32).' Hengstenberg, *Ibid.* p. 469: cf. Part I. p. 95, n. 1.

the Hebrews to plant deeply in man's heart, and that by painful and protracted discipline, the grand conception of God's perfect truthfulness and the unswerving justice of His rule; and never till this object was attained could faith in immortality, as now unveiled to us by Christ and the Apostles, have been fostered in the Church of God to any salutary purpose. The Hebrews, it is true, like other nations of antiquity, were never left in total darkness with respect to the existence of the human spirit after death. Some intimations of their knowledge¹ on that subject are discovered even in the earliest of their sacred writings; and accordingly the absence of allusion to a future stage of being where as Christians we should have expected such allusion, or the vague and joyless terms in which a future life is sometimes mentioned, where as Christians we should use a more explicit phraseology, can only be adduced to shew that Hades was to them more shadowy than to us, or that ideas of immortality had been remanded to the background in the admonitions of the Hebrew doctors. And the explanation of this difference, as of others like it, will be found in what has been already more than once suggested,—the elementary condition of the people. Their chief thoughts must all be concentrated for a time upon the law of temporal, visible retribution, as dispensed through the arrangements of a theocratic system, in order that when this idea was deeply rooted, faith in the invisible and future retribution might spontane-

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II.

*Elementary
condition
of the He-
brews, as
explaining
the way in
which the
future life
is treated
in the Old
Testament.*

¹ For some valuable remarks on this point, I would refer inquirers to a recent Essay by Mr T. T. Pe-
rowne, *The Essential Coherence of the Old and New Testaments*, pp. 84 sq. Camb. 1858.

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II.

ously grow up. The Israelitish worthy, confident that God was with him, had been meanwhile going forward on his earthly pilgrimage, in a condition, as to intellectual certainty, like that of Abraham himself, who, under the immediate eye of an unfailing Benefactor, started on his journey to the land of Canaan, 'not knowing whither he went.'

The Babylonish exile the penalty of indulging heathenish notions.

Before I bring these observations to a close, it may be well to glance a moment down the stream of Hebrew history and ascertain the feelings of the sacred writers at the period of the Babylonish exile with regard to the admissibility of foreign notions into their hereditary creed. An apt example may be found among the visions of Ezekiel, who more than other prophets was accustomed to revert for imagery to the days of the Exodus and to events which followed closely in its train. He thus becomes a species of transition-link from Egypt to Babylon. The flower of the two tribes who had been rescued from the scourge of the Assyrian spoiler were now smitten by a like calamity; and, refusing to be comforted, had hung their harps upon the trees that lined the banks of the Chebar, when a prophet, the partaker of their sad mischances, was commissioned to point out the moral agencies which had precipitated this catastrophe. How dark the contrast to a mind like his, between the coming up from Egypt and the going down to Babylon! There he saw a youthful people full of hope and ardour, marching with the Lord Jehovah at their head to occupy the soil which He had promised to their fathers. Here he sees them broken, joyless and forlorn, a nation of mourners and of

captives, driven from the homes which had been long preserved to them as by a miracle of mercy, and succumbing under the terrific curse which lighted on the wandering Cain. As contemplated by Ezekiel, the whole Hebrew race were going backward; they were exiles in a moral desert, in the 'wilderness of the people;' they were forfeiting the vantage-ground on which their fathers had been planted, and, abandoned to the grasp of a blaspheming power, were melting fast away into the heathen multitudes by whom they were surrounded. And the cause of this disastrous retrogression was declared to be the preference which the Israelite himself had manifested for all heathenish modes of thought. His craven wish had been to lose his sacred nationality and so to be commingled and confounded with the world. 'We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone' (xx. 32).

To make Ezekiel more entirely conscious of the evils that were eating out the national life, he is transferred in spirit to the precincts of the Hebrew sanctuary (ch. viii.), the spot on which, if ever, might be found the lingering vestiges of unadulterated truth. But no: in rivalry or feigned alliance with the altar of Jehovah, he beholds 'the image of jealousy.' A nature-god of Canaan, viewed as Baal, the producer, or as Moloch, the destroyer, stands enthroned upon a level with the God of Abraham. 'Son of man,' is the inquiry, 'seest thou what they do, even the great abominations that the house of Israel committed here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary?' And then, as if to indicate the depth of the corruption

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II.

now contracted by the Hebrew Church, Ezekiel has to witness, one by one, the other great idolatries, which, in despair of God and of her own religion (v. 2) she had borrowed from the heathen nations round about her. First of all he sees the grovelling rites of Egypt, imaged under 'every form of creeping things and abominable beasts.' The seventy elders of the house of Israel, faithless representatives of those who once had followed Moses to the holy mount (Ex. xxiv. 1) as witnesses of the more secret glory of Jehovah, are now impiously attempting to change that 'glory of the incorruptible God;' they stand before the image of Egyptian reptiles 'every man with his censer in his hand.' Another vision is unfolded to the prophet; he beholds in a fresh quarter of the sacred precincts that the old Phœnician worship of Adonis, the original type of the Osirian mysteries, has threatened to efface the purity of earlier generations. Women are assembled at the temple of Jehovah, to bemoan the loss of Tammuz, as the prelude to licentious revelry and diabolic orgies. Last of all the prophet's eye is fixed upon the inner court of the Lord's house to which the priests alone have access and which priests no longer blush to desecrate and to deride. It does not seem enough that the community at large are superadding the zoolatry of Egypt to the foul abominations of Phœnicia: men of priestly rank, the 'princes of the sanctuary' though kneeling on the sacred threshold, have each turned his back upon the holiest of all, and, like the Old Parsee, whose superstitions they are now adopting 'worship the sun toward the east' (v. 16). 'Then He said unto

me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke Me to anger; and lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in fury; Mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in Mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them' (vv. 17, 18).

CHAPTER III.

Characteristics of Medo-Persian Heathenism.

Μάγοι δὲ καὶ πᾶν τὸ Ἄριον γένος, ὡς καὶ τοῦτο γράφει ὁ Εὐδήμιος, οἱ μὲν τόπων, οἱ δὲ χρόνον καλοῦσι τὸ νοητὸν ἅπαν καὶ τὸ ἡνωμένον· ἐξ οὗ διακριθῆναι ἢ θεὸν ἀγαθὸν καὶ δαίμονα κακὸν, ἢ φῶς καὶ σκότος πρὸ τούτων, ὡς ἐνίοις λέγειν. Οὗτοι δὲ οὖν καὶ αὐτοὶ μετὰ τὴν ἀδιάκριτον φύσιν διακρινομένην ποιοῦσι τὴν διττὴν συστοιχίαν τῶν κρειττόνων· τῆς μὲν ἡγεῖσθαι τὸν Ὠρομάσδην, τῆς δὲ τὸν Ἀρειμάνιον.—Damascius, *De Primis Principiis*, c. cxxv. (p. 384, Kopp).

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III.

*Ancient
Persia.*

IF the object of the present work had been to trace the early growth of heathenism, without regard to the contemporaneous fortunes of the sacred family or the possible interchanges of religious thought between the Hebrew and other systems, the true place of the discussions opened in this chapter would have doubtless been immediately after the religions of Hindustan¹. For though it be impossible by means of extant monuments to carry back the civilisation of Persia to the same remote antiquity², much less to rank her with the

¹ This remark appears to have been called for by complaints of an intelligent and not unfriendly critic in the *Colonial Church Chronicle*, who, in common with some other reviewers of Part III., lost sight of the original intention of the present writer as expressed in the title-page of his work. Let it be again repeated that these chapters do not pretend to furnish a complete and systematic

history of ancient heathenism; but rather to exhibit the chief points of correspondency or contrast between heathenism and revealed religion.

² 'The true historic period does not commence till five generations before Darius Hystaspis (or about B.C. 680), when Achæmenes founded a kingdom in Persia Proper.' Rawlinson, *Journal of As. Soc.* xv. 252.

great primeval empires of Babylon, of Egypt, or of China, facts are now at our command which will determine the exact position of the Persians proper in the ancient family of man. The region known as Persia (*Parasa* in cuneiform inscriptions) was a leading province of the 'pure Iran,' whose frontiers, reckoning eastward from the Caspian gates, extended to the very foot of the Hindú Alps; and therefore, as the name¹ itself will testify, the population which at length predominated was an off-shoot from the Aryan stock, who after settling in the region of the Five Rivers, were the undisputed lords of *Ārya-varṭta* and diffused their influence to the southernmost extremity of the Hindú Peninsula.

The proofs of this connexion have been strengthened at all points by late researches and inductions of comparative philology. The language of the ancient Persian, or at least that one of many current languages, the Zend, in which the earliest of his 'sacred' books were written, is found to be most intimately related to the Sanskrit of the *Vēdas*: it deserves to be entitled second, if not eldest of the sister-tongues which form the Indo-European family. So close, indeed, is the affinity both in structure and in actual words that we are justified on purely philological grounds in urging the protracted intercourse² of Persians and Hindús; who clung together as a great community ages

*Related to
India.*

¹ See Part II. p. 7, n. 2, and the references there. The form *Iran*, which has been already detected on coins of the Sassanian period, is undoubtedly equivalent to *Ariana*,

Aīrya, and *Aīryana*.

² M. Müller's 'Last Results of the Persian Researches,' as reported in Bunsen's *Phil. of Univ. Hist.* i. 112; Spiegel, *Avesta*, i. 5, Leipzig, 1852.

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III.*Examples
of such
kinship.*

after the migrations of the Celt, the Teuton and the Slave across the bounds of eastern Europe.

Fresh and still more definite information is reflected on this subject from the ancient books of the Hindús. The names of certain gods and heroes, who were strangers, it would seem, to the mythology of other kindred tribes, continued to be held in equal reverence by the A'ryan on the Sutlej and his brethren on the Persian Gulf. The memory, for example, of a Hindú sun-god with the title *Vivaswat* is lingering¹ in the Zend *Vivanghwat*, whom the Persian honoured as the father of the mighty Yima, first and best of human rulers; and although in stories of the Indo-A'ryan, Vivaswat had *two* sons, Manu and Yama, each invested with transcendant dignity, and so inheriting a separate empire, one within the sphere of the living and the other of the dead, it is impossible to doubt the common parentage and ultimate identity of Yima and Yama. In like manner, the mysterious *soma* of the Védas, treated there not only as the best of sacrificial plants but also as a true divinity², had been reflected in the sacred *homa*³ whose enlivening juices, first expressed by Vivan-

¹ Lassen, *Ind. Alt.* I. 518, 519.

² Part II. p. 14, n. 1, pp. 18, 19, 154.

³ Burnouf, *Études*, in the *Journal Asiat.* (1844), p. 475, and Spiegel, *Avesta*, I. 8. This change of a Sanskrit sibilant into a Zendic aspirate is of constant occurrence: e.g. the geographical name *hapta hindu* of the Avesta is the *sapta sindhu* of the Védas; both referring to the north of India, or the land of the 'Seven Rivers' (i.e. the Five of the Pan-

jáb, together with the Indus and the Saraswati). The word Saraswati itself is also traceable in Haraqaiti. Rawlinson (*Journal of As. Soc.* xv. 251, n. 1), who mentions this example, adds: 'The proper names of men, too, both in the Vendidad, in the cuneiform inscriptions, and even in the Greek notices of Persia, are in many cases Vedic or Puranic, and can almost always be referred to a Sanscrit etymology, thus authenticating the connexion of the races.'

ghwat, were celebrated with a kindred fervour in the earliest of the Zendic hymns.

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But facts, which have thus tended to authenticate the old connexion of the Persians and Hindús, may also be adduced to illustrate the grounds of their eventual separation. It is not material for our present purpose to consider in what part of Asia the divergence had originated; whether (as some think) in the locality which formed the cradle of the human race, and so anterior to the first dispersion; or whether (as is far more probable) that schism was consummated at a period, when the Aryan character was fully formed beneath the glowing skies of India. But be this as it may, we have now ample reason for concluding that the final rupture in that primitive population was in part¹ at least connected with religious differences. Rebelling, it would seem, against the 'wild-grown nature-worship' which had characterised the earlier period of their history, or dissatisfied, perhaps, with the account there given of conflicts which they felt to be proceeding in the outer and the inner world, one section of the Aryans fell away from the society of their brethren, and in close analogy with later times and distant countries left the traces of the feud engrained in their religious phraseology. Thus, the Sanskrit name for god, *déva*, bearing witness to the ancient worship of the element of light², is plainly kindred to the Zend *daéva*; and yet this latter tongue had ceased to use it of divinities in general, and confined it to a class of hostile

*Religious
differences
one cause of
the separation
between
Indo-A'ry-
ans and
Perso-A'ry-
ans.*

*Verbal
traces of
this schism.*

¹ 'Es finden sich nun auch Spuren, welche darauf schliessen lassen, dass die Trennung der beiden Völker zum Theile wenigstens, aus religiösen

Gründen erfolgt sei.' Spiegel, *Avesta*, I. 9.

Part II. p. 12, n. 2.

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III.

genii following in the train of the great Evil One. The highest also of the Vaidic gods, the glorious Indra¹, whom the warm imagination of the early Aryan had been wont to picture as diffusing genial showers upon the earth, or chasing from the clouds the various ministers of evil, had become in Persia, as in later stages of Hindú mythology, a spirit of inferior rank; yet with the noticeable difference, that the Perso-Aryans had proceeded to invest their Andra with malevolent attributes. In further proof of this revulsion in men's thoughts, it is contended by some writers² that the first of good divinities among the Persians, viz. *Ahura*, or *Ahura-mazda* (Ormazd), is etymologically connected with *Asura* in the mythology of the Old Hindú; who was accustomed to employ the title as descriptive of the multitudinous demons dreaded by himself, or by his household, though it seems to have been treated by the earliest of the Vaidic poets as a word of no ill-omen.

*Reputed
founder of
'Zoroas-
trianism.'*

Every fresh investigation into the degree of these divergences, as well as the distinct formation and consolidation of the Perso-Aryan creed, is fitly prefaced by a question as to the antiquity and origin of its reputed founder. Not long after the Christian era³ it was usual to ascribe the planting of the sacred system of the Persians to an indi-

¹ Part II. pp. 9, 15.

² e. g. Spiegel, I. 9, followed by Dr Donaldson, *Christ. Orthod.* p. 128; but cf. Burnouf, *Commentaire sur le Yaçna*, I. 78, Paris, 1833.

³ See a list of the conflicting testimonies with respect to his age in Dr John Wilson, *The Pársi Religion*, pp. 398—400, Bombay, 1843. Döl-

linger, *Heidenhum*, p. 352, staggered by these contradictions, has revived the theory of more than one Zoroaster, or at least distinguishes between Zarathustra the Perso-Aryan prophet and the Zoroaster, Zaratras, or Zaratus of Greek writers, who was really, he thinks, a type, or mythical creation, representing a

vidual teacher, whom they designated Zarathustra (Zoroaster); and the scanty remnants of that people, who have found a shelter from the fury of the Moslem, in the towns of western India, or the wilderness of Yezd, look up with reverence to the same Zartúsht as the great prophet of Parseeism¹. There is also evidence to shew that in the judgment of at least some Persians, he had flourished in the reign of king *Vistáspa*², or (according to a common change) *Gustásp*; and other writers³, starting from this incident, have not unnaturally referred the ministry of Zoroaster, and the earliest publication of the Zoroastrian tenets, to the life-time of *Hystaspes*, father of the great Darius.

Now if it be meant that Zoroaster, a contemporary of Darius, was the actual author of the system of religion, in which *Ahura-mazda* (Ormazd) became the principal object of men's worship, we have reasons the most cogent and conclusive for

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III.

Ormazd-
worship
older than
the reign of
Darius.

totally different (Hamitic) form of heathenism, but ultimately confounded with the historic Zarathustra, when the fame of the latter had extended to Western nations: cf. Westergaard, *Zendavesta*, 'Pref.' pp. 16 sq. Copenhagen, 1852-54.

¹ Dosabhoj Framjee, *The Parsees*, pp. 238 sq. Lond. 1858.

² See Spiegel, *Avesta*, I. 41 sq. who quotes the traditional account of the Bombay Parsees. A regular history of their 'legislator,' the *Zartúsht-Námah*, written in the 13th century after Christ, has been translated from the Persian by Mr Eastwick, and is appended to Dr J. Wilson's *Pársi Religion*.

³ Ammianus Marcellinus (Lib. XXIII. c. 6), of the 4th cent. after

Christ, is most explicit on this point. He also says that Zoroaster was a Bactrian, that he made additions to the creed of the Magi, deriving these additions 'ex Chaldæorum arcanis;' and further that he visited the north of India, and reaching a secluded spot among forests, conferred with members of the Bráhmancial order. The testimony of Agathias (of the 6th cent. after Christ) is more valuable (II. 24), because he professes to give the opinions of the Persians themselves; yet while repeating the story that Zoroaster lived at the court of Hystaspes, he added, as the view of the Persians, that it was very doubtful whether this Hystaspes was the father of Darius (εἰτε καὶ ἄλλος οὗτος ὑπήρχεν Ὑστάσπης).



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rejecting such interpretation. Ormazd had long been revered as 'the god of the A'ryans', when Darius wrote the history of his exploits upon the rock of Behistun: indeed some passages in that magnificent inscription will not suffer us to doubt that the great movement headed by Darius was essentially *religious*², aiming at the restoration of an ancient faith which had been threatened, and in part subverted, by the influence of the Magus. The first care of the victorious prince was 'to rebuild the temples which Gomates had destroyed, and to restore to the people the sacred chants and worship, of which Gomates had deprived them'; and, as indicating both the nature and extent of the corruption, he declares expressly that 'the *lie* had become abounding in the land, both in Persia and in Media, and in the other provinces'.⁴ Supposing, therefore, the age of Zoroaster to have been the fifth or sixth century before Christ, we are reduced to the necessity of concluding that his mission had been rather to restore and purify, than to initiate the sacred system which was afterwards connected with his name. He must have been, as he indeed is sometimes represented, nothing more than one important member in a series of 'ancient *Persian prophets*'.⁵

¹ 'The Median engravers, who executed the Scythic version of the great inscription of Bisitun (Behistun), so well understood the difference between Aryan Dualism and Scythic Magism, that when they had to speak of Ormazd in connexion with other gods, they interpolated after the name the distinctive epithet of "god of the A'ryans."'
Rawlinson, *Jour. As. Soc.* xv. 249.

² See Rawlinson's *Herod.* App. Bk. I. Essay v.; App. Bk. III. Essay II.

³ *Behist. Inscr.* (as given, among other places, in the above work, Vol. II. p. 595); where Darius adds, 'As (it was) before, so I restored what (had been) taken away. By the grace of Ormazd I did (this).'

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 593.

⁵ Thus in the '*Deatir* or sacred

But the tendency of modern criticism, with only a few exceptions, is to carry back the age of Zoroaster into pre-historic times, or representing him as the 'Vyása' of the Perso-Aryans to invest him with the dubious, half-impersonal character, which attaches to his Hindú prototype, the so-called author of the earliest Véda. While some (as Lassen¹) have declared it utterly impossible to fix the period when he lived and so abandon the inquiry in despair, Sir H. Rawlinson has lately started an hypothesis² which finds in Zoroaster the personification of an old religious system, or in other words the sacred eponym of an adjacent, but non-Aryan race. To understand this view we must remember³ that three different populations co-existed from an early date upon the plain of the Tigris and Euphrates, one descended from a Scythic, Cushite or Turanian stock; a second cognate with the Babylonians and Assyrians, or, in other words, Semitic; and the third consisting of the Medes and Persians proper who were members of the Indo-European family. Neglecting for the present the effects produced by the Semitic element, it seems that Scyths, the aboriginal owners of the soil, were strongly intermixed with Aryans in the whole of ancient Media, and

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III.*Recent theories respecting Zoroaster.**Magism and its propagation.*

writings of the ancient Persian Prophets,' translated by Mulla Firuz Ibn Kaus (Bombay, 1818), Zirtúsht is the 13th prophet in the series, and the fifth Sassan (contemporary with the emperor Heraclius) the last. But the historical value of this work, which seems to have been fabricated as late as the 16th century, is very small indeed. It seems to have issued from the syncretistic movement, of which Akbar was the leading spirit;

cf. Spiegel, *Avesta*, I. 49, and Wilson, *Parsi Religion*, pp. 411, 412.

¹ 'Seine Zeit zu bestimmen wird nie möglich seyn.' *Ind. Alt.* I. 754.

² See his paper entitled *Notes on the Early History of Babylonia*, in the *Journ. As. Soc.* XV. 215—259, and the still more recent discussion of the subject in Rawlinson's *Herod.* as referred to in p. 152, n. 2.

³ Cf. Part I. pp. 68 sq., and Rawlinson, as above.

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III.

*Religious
policy of
Cambyses,*

that, owing to the higher civilisation of the Scyth or to the witchery exerted by some features of his thaumaturgic system, the new-comers almost universally adopted the religion there established¹. This, according to the present view, was genuine Magism, —the primeval faith associated far and wide with the time-honoured name of Zoroaster, and at length erroneously ascribed to early ‘Persians,’ by Herodotus², who represents it as ‘purely and entirely elemental,’ or a nature-worship of the simplest form, expressed in adoration of ‘the sun and moon, of fire, of earth, of water and of winds.’ The same ideas, it might be not unreasonably contended, found acceptance in some parts of Persia proper; and when Cyrus was at length supreme in every province of Iran, he seems to have conciliated his Scytho-Median subjects by his patronage of Magi and by placing Magism³ on a level with the worship of the great Ormazd and other A’ryan deities. This statement rests, indeed, on the authority of the *Cyropædia*; yet whatever value be assigned to it, there is now ample reason for concluding that such lenient measures were at once reversed on the accession of Cambyses, who, impelled by a fanatic spirit bordering upon frenzy, had extended his religious

¹ ‘The Medes not only adopted the religion of their subjects, but to a great extent blended with them, admitting whole Scythic tribes into their nation. Magism entirely superseded among the Medes the former A’ryan faith,’ &c. Rawlinson’s *Herod.* Vol. I. p. 430.

² I. 131.

³ Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 1, § 23, and Creuzer, *Symbol.* I. 189, n. 1. The conduct here ascribed to Cyrus

will receive some illustration from what Herodotus states respecting Xerxes, who, departing from the policy of Cambyses, and to some extent of his own father, did not scruple to consult the Magian soothsayers (VII. 19, 37). It was probably much later when the Magi as a body were installed as priests of Ormazd; for ‘their name *Magu* occurs only twice in all the extant Zend texts.’ Westergaard, ‘Pref.’ p. 17.

warfare into the Valley of the Nile. It is accordingly narrated that the old adherents of the Magian faith, emboldened by the absence¹ of the despot in the west, attempted to recover their importance by intriguing in behalf of the Pseudo-Smerdis; and as soon as the pretender had been planted on the throne proceeded to the extirpation of established forms of worship. The avenging of this impious wrong became, as we have seen, a leading object in the policy of Darius. He declares repeatedly that 'by the help of Ormazd' he had confounded all the schemes of the insurgents, had abolished the reign of lies, had reared afresh the temples that were ruined by the Magians, had restored the several branches of the ancient liturgy. To this indeed we may ascribe the fact that king Darius was regarded by succeeding ages in the light of a religious reformer; hence the honourable mention of Gustasp (Hystaspis) in the sacred books of Persia; hence the feeling of respect with which his memory was long cherished by all classes of the Old Parsees.

It must be granted that the difficulties attaching to this theory of Zoroastrianism are neither few nor inconsiderable; and yet some theory of the kind appears to be almost necessitated by the force of modern evidence, especially of that discovered on the cuneiform inscriptions. In favour of it is the circumstance that the religion of early 'Persia,' as described by Herodotus, has scarcely aught in common either with the religion of Persian monuments or Persian sacred books; and therefore we are driven to suppose that his remarks apply to

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III.

and Darius.

Plausibility of the supposition that Zoroaster was at first a representative of Scythic Magism.

¹ *Behist. Inscr.* (Rawlinson's *Herod.* Vol. II. p. 593).

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*Difficulties
attaching to
this theory.*

Yet, on the other hand, we have an almost equal difficulty in understanding how the Perso-Aryan people could in after-times have been induced to reverence the memory of Zoroaster, to accept a mere personification of Magism as the favoured organ of their own beneficent deity, and elevate what has been called the 'old heresonym of the Scyths' into the teacher of Gustasp, whose son became a champion of the Aryan gods¹. This difficulty is relieved perhaps by taking into account the flexible and imitative genius of the ancient Persians, which extended also to religious matters²; and as positive proof will be adduced of minor amalgamations between the creed of Persia and other systems, it is possible that some such fusion was gradually effected on a larger scale, and that on the subsiding of the storm in which the festival of the Magophonia had originated, 'a mongrel religion

¹ 'Under the disguise of *Zarathushtra*, which was the nearest practicable Aryan form, *Zira-ishtar* (or the seed of Venus) became a prophet and lawgiver, receiving inspiration from *Ahuramazda*, and reforming the national religion.' Sir H. Rawlinson, *Journ. As. Soc.* xv. 254. This

learned writer has elsewhere (p. 246) sought to justify his explanation of the word *Zarathushtra*; but does not seem to have noticed the verbal affinity of *Ishhtar*, *Asteria*, and *Astarte* (this last representing the Aphrodite of Semitic tribes).

² Herod. l. 131, 135.

grew up, wherein the Magian and the A'ryan creeds were blended together'.¹

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But whatever might be the precise complexion of that older system it received its death-blow² at the period of the Macedonian occupation, or at least amid the sanguinary struggles of the Parthian conquest. From the former, we must date a large infusion of Hellenic thoughts and customs; while the latter was a fresh uprising of the Scythic population, banished or held down in bondage from the time of Cyrus.

*Decline
and fall of
Ormazd-
worship.*

Owing to the strong persistence of these foreign agencies, the sacred language of the Perso-A'ryan was depressed, neglected, and well-nigh extinguished; the old worship of Ormazd gave place again to Magism³, tinctured, it may be, with some Hellenic speculations; nor when Scyths were finally ejected by the daring of the native or Sassanian monarchs, and hurled back on one side into Georgia, and on the other to Afghanistan, could the religion of Cambyses and Darius be restored to its original purity. Henceforth it bore the frequent

*Reaction
under the
Sassanian
monarchs.*

¹ Rawlinson's *Herod.* Vol. I. p. 431. The vitality of Magism was evinced for ages after, in a form analogous to that already noticed (above, pp. 55 sq.) in discussing the animal-worship of the Old Egyptian, viz. by transfusing one of its more cardinal doctrines into the very soul of the new creed. This peculiarity consisted in the adoration of the element of fire. Hence the name 'fire-temples' and the title 'fire-worshippers.' I may mention that Mr Dosabhoj Framjee (*The Parsees*, pp. 256 sq.), affecting to believe, like other Anglicised Parsees, that the religion of their

own sacred books is pure theism, 'repels with indignation' the idea of worshipping any of the material elements. A Parsee, he says, while engaged in prayer, is merely 'directed to stand before the fire, or to direct his face towards the sun, as the most proper symbols of the Almighty.' But disclaimers of this kind are not easily reconciled with the express assertions of Parsee authorities; as indeed may be seen at length in Dr Wilson's *Parsi Religion*, pp. 194 sq.

² Spiegel, *Avesta*, I. 16, 17.

³ Sir H. Rawlinson, as before, p. 255.

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Final intermixture of Ormazd-worship with foreign elements.

traces of its intercourse with foreign creeds. Its sacred writings were indeed recovered, but no evidence survives to tell us, whether they were then collected and restored from extant manuscripts or from oral tradition. A new tongue (the Pehlevi or Huzvâresh) was adopted as the vehicle of public worship, and the badge of the new dynasty; and since the Greek, the Jew, the Buddhist and the Christian had all from various quarters penetrated to the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, it is not so difficult to understand how the 'reformers, teachers, prophets' who sprang up with this fresh outburst of Persian nationality, should have all departed widely from the older standards, or should, speaking generally, have 'formed their language and the whole train of their ideas on a Semitic model'.

The Avesta, or Zend-Avesta.

And if the general history of the Medo-Persian were thus chequered and eventful, we shall be prepared to find no small variety in the tone of his religion and the texture of his sacred books. The whole collection of such writings, or at least of parts which have come down to us, is known as the *Avesta*, literally the 'Text'.

Relation of the Avesta to the original sacred books of Persia.

One chief result of modern exploration in this region of philology has been to demonstrate, that whether as preserved in the original, or as translated by Parsees, the treatises of the *Avesta in their present shape* can date no farther back than the Sassanian revival, in the time of Artaxerxes.

¹ Max Müller, as before, p. 118; Renan, *Hist. des Langues Sémitiques*, i. 77, 78, Paris, 1858.

² Spiegel, p. 45: 'bei den späteren Parsen stets gebrauchte Be-

zeichnung für den Text der heiligen Schriften.' *Zand* or *Zend* properly means 'commentary' or 'translation' (i. e. of ancient texts): see Westergaard, *Zendavesta*, 'Pref.' p. 1.

xerxes, or the third century of the Christian era (A.D. 226). Another of those results has tended to confirm and justify suspicions with regard to the antiquity of several writings which are commonly adduced as high authorities by modern Parsees. Of one important work (the *Bundehesh*) we may affirm with certainty that it had never existed in the Zend, or older dialect of Persia, but was first compiled in the court-language of the restoration-period; while some others (as the *Dabistân* and *Desâtîr*) may be rejected absolutely as fabrications of far later centuries. Such criticisms are not, of course, intended to deny that many chapters of the Persian sacred books are capable of being carried back to a most venerable antiquity. Whole works may have been actually committed to writing as early as 400 B.C., for 'books of Zoroastrians' are related¹ to have perished at the time of Alexander's expedition. Many also of the sacred chants and ceremonial precepts may, as now existing, have originated at the epoch of the first migrations. Yet, while granting this, our ablest scholars seem to be persuaded more and more that works which have been brought together in the Avesta, are not only the productions of different ages, but have all been modified and modernised by the intrusion of fresh matter. They stand, in other words, to primitive documents of the Ormazd-religion in substantially the same relation as the Prayer-Book to the Use of Sarum.

In attempting to refer the several parts of the Avesta to the different epochs which produced them, Spiegel, the most competent of living writers

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III.

¹ Cf. Westergaard's *Pref.* p. 18.

*Different
parts of the
Avesta in
the probable
order of
composition.*

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III.*The Yasna.**The Vendidad.*

on this subject¹, draws attention to three separate stages of progression or development. The earliest stage, he thinks, is represented by the second part of the *Yasna*,—the liturgy or sacrificial service of the Persians, consisting of invocations to the 'pure' Ormazd, to elements and energies of nature, to the spirit of the worshipper himself, and also to beneficent genii whose abodes are in the world invisible. The mode of handling theological topics is there characterised by a remarkable absence both of order and precision: every thing accounted pure and brilliant, beautiful and salutary, is the object of half-conscious homage and unreasoning worship, so that early invocations of the *Yasna* may be justly brought into comparison with the oldest hymns of the Rig-Véda. The next stage of that religion, according to the same authority, is represented by the *Vendidad*, or 'Law Given,' in which, besides a most incongruous list of remedies for earthly ills, has been narrated the creation of the 'sixteen holy places,' the origin and growth of evil and its partial overthrow as the result of Zoroaster's mission; all communicated in the form of a dialogue between that prophet and the great Ormazd. As the theology of Persia has become at this stage far more definite and distinctive, bearing witness to the presence of the main ingredients which compose the 'Zoroastrian' system, the transition may perhaps be illustrated from the course pursued by Hindú thought in passing from the simplest form of nature-worship to the cultivated

¹ Spiegel's first notice of these points was published in Weber's *Ind. Studien* (1850), I. 313 sq., and he has

since extended the inquiry in his edition of the *Avesta* and elsewhere, arriving at the same result.

Bráhmaism of the heroic age. The third and most important step in the development here indicated led to the production of the first part of the Yasna, and the multifarious hymns and prayers collected in the *Yeshts*. The gods and genii of the Persian creed have now been classified in parallel ranks, according to their different properties: the attributes of each are clearly separated and dogmatically fixed: the system known as Zoroaster's has attained its full proportions; its whole 'character is unmistakeable:' while the martial and intolerant spirit of Sassanian princes breathing in their sacred books will frequently remind us of the terrible Siva-ism of later Hindustan, which, after scourging and extruding the disciples of the Buddha, left its dark and bloody trace on the Bráhmanical religion.

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III.

*The Yeshts
or Yashts.*

No sooner have we entered on a more minute investigation of the Perso-Aryan dogmas than allusions meet us, here and there, to a mysterious Being of transcendent dignity, yet one whose place in the construction of that system is most difficult to ascertain; enveloped as it is in clouds and controversies, which have long continued to obscure the character and parentage of Zarathustra himself. I am referring to a deity entitled *Zervan* or *Zervána-akarana*, who, strange to say, had sometimes been not only associated but identified¹ with Zoroaster, and described as both 'the origin of the Medians and the father of the gods.' The old opinion was, that in this member of the Persian system proofs

*Who was
Zervána-akarana?*

Old hypothesis.

¹ As, for instance, by Moses of Chorene, a writer of the 5th century (Wilson's *Pérsie*, p. 128). According also to this Armenian authority, the people of the East identified Zervan with Sim or Shem (cf. Rawlinson, in *Journ. As. Soc.* xv. 245, n. 2).

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might be discerned of a conception bordering on the pure and spiritual monotheism inherited by members of the sacred family. *Zervána-akarana* was held to designate a personal god, to whom was given the appellation, 'Time without Bounds,' or 'Uncreated Time'.¹ Philosophy had also learned to speak of him as 'universal Being,' as the grand personification of eternity, as the primordial and illimitable void from which creation in its varying aspects is successively evolved. He was the basis of all other forms of being, whence conflicting powers of the phenomenal world had each derived its origin, and whither it was destined to revert on the expiring of the present strife, and the completion of the present cycle of existence. Zervan was, in other words, the Absolute, or primal essence, like the *Tae-keih* of the Confucianist, the Bythos of the early Gnostic or the 'O' of Neo-Platonism. Like them he was believed to have existed long before the contrariety of good and evil had been mani-

¹ While there is considerable unanimity in rendering *Zervan* either 'Old' or 'Time' (= *Kpóvos*), the precise meaning of the adjective *akarana* is still matter of dispute. Anquetil Duperron, the first translator of the *Avesta*, rendered the word by 'sans bornes;' but as Schlottmann observes, against Spiegel (Weber's *Ind. Stud.* i. 378), it is not derivable from the Pehlvi root 𐬀𐬀𐬀𐬀, which gave rise to the old interpretation 'boundless.' It is rather (he thinks with Roth and others) to be explained by reference to the Sanskrit *akarana*, 'uncaused,' 'uncreated' (from *karana* 'cause'). That the Perso-Aryans were not only familiar with such epithets, but were in the habit of applying them to the heavenly

bodies, is obvious from a remarkable hymn of the Yasna, which Burnouf translates as follows (*Comment. sur le Yaçna*, p. 559): 'J'invoque, je célèbre et ces lieux et ces pays, et les parcs des bestiaux, et les maisons, et les lieux où se gardent les grains, et les eaux, et les terres, et les arbres, et cette terre et ce ciel, et le vent pur, les astres, la lune et le soleil, lumières qui sont sans commencement, créées, et toutes les créations de l'être saint et céleste, ceux et celles qui sont purs, (génies) maîtres de pureté.' It has been suggested to me that as one meaning of the Sanskrit *karana* is 'the time occupied by the moon in passing through a small part of her orbit,' *a-karana* might possibly have meant 'undivided.'

fested in creation; and accordingly the practice was to represent him rather as a 'metaphysical abstraction' dwelling in impenetrable void, than as an active and presiding deity; he was said to have been neither 'endowed with self-consciousness' nor 'possessed of moral perfections.' But here, as in some other cases¹, a more critical knowledge of the language, and a juster estimate of the antiquity, of sacred documents has modified the first conclusions of speculative philosophy. It is found, for instance, that so far from Zervan standing out conspicuous in the creed of ancient Persia, the allusions to him in her sacred writings are extremely few, as well as cursory and indistinct. Thus, in the principal passage cited from the *Vendidad*² in reference to this subject, Zarathustra, when the words are accurately rendered, has been merely made to say; 'What the holy-minded One (*i. e.* Ormazd) created, he created in the *boundless* (or, the uncaused) *Time*.' And in a subsequent verse, which forms the second important passage bearing on the character of Zervan, the favoured servant of Ormazd is bidden to 'invoke the self-created firmament, the *boundless* (or, the uncaused) *Time*, and the breeze that works in the high places'. On a careful scrutiny of these and other like expressions, it appears that only one of two inferences is really justifiable, either, that some elementary substratum was here said to have existed from eternity, and so to have preceded the

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Real nature of the evidence respecting Zervan.

Inference from it.

¹ *e. g.* Gibbon, ch. VIII.

² See, especially, Part III. pp. 62 sq. on the nature of the Chinese Tao.

³ Farg. XIX. § 33 (*Avesta*, I. 245, ed. Spiegel). The original here is:

'dathat. gpentô. mainyus. dathat. zrvânê. akaranê.'

⁴ *Ibid.* § 44: cf. § 55, and Spiegel's essay in the *Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländ. Gesell.* (1851), v. 228, 229.

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III.

formation of the visible universe, or else, that 'un-created Time' had been regarded as a species of *material*, in and out of which was formed that definite period of duration, which, according to the Perso-Aryans, was allotted for the life-time of the present world. Such language does not, therefore, warrant the hypothesis that Zervan was the principal god of Persia, in the judgment of those writers who compiled her sacred books.

Ultimate belief in some one Primal Essence.

It is again remarkable that the name of Zervan is never found upon the cuneiform inscriptions of Darius Hystaspis. Every thing beneficent is there ascribed distinctly to the grace and succour of Ormazd,—a circumstance which, owing to the constant repetition of the formula, could hardly fail to have impressed on the explorer his belief in the 'radical and irreconcilable' divergence between Zervan-worship and the genuine system of the Perso-A'ryans. Still there is no reasonable ground for doubting that in subsequent centuries, when the feeling after unity was re-awakened in the human spirit, and when men were anxious to revert, in thought at least, to something permanent, illimitable, uncreated,—some existence underlying and reducing into harmony the painful contradictions of the visible universe,—a string of texts like those surviving in the *Vendidad* were eagerly appropriated by more philosophic thinkers, till with such the name of *Zervan* was the recognised expression of belief in some great Primal Essence. I subjoin one extract from a later Parsee writing¹ of consider-

¹ The work entitled *I'lmá-t-Islám* was composed about A. D. 1126, and contains the replies of a Parsee doc-

tor to a Muslimán inquirer: see the original in Wilson's *Pársis*, pp. 135, 136.

able repute, in which this theory of Zervan has been formally developed. The opening sentence strikes me as containing an allusion to the passage of the *Vendidad* above recited: CHAP.
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‘In the religion of Zoroaster, it is to this effect declared, that God (*Khudá*) created every thing from time; and that the Creator is *Time*. And for *Time* no limit has been made, and no height has been made, and no root has been made. And it always has been, and it will always be. He who has intelligence even will not be able to tell whence it has been made. So great is its glory that there is no other being who can be called Creator, because the creation was not then made. Afterwards, fire and earth were created; and from their union *Hormuzd* (Ormazd) was created. *Time* was the Creator, and this Lord has guarded the creation he has made.’ *Example of such belief.*

Nor is the theory of Zervan, as here advocated, inconsistent with a second, which has recently proceeded from a different quarter, viz. that this god, whose worship had in later times been made to rest on rare and dubious texts of the Avesta, was in fact an early importation from some foreign and non-Aryan system. We have reason for supposing that the name of Zervan is related to the *ziru-banit* of Assyrian monuments¹. The title there comes forward as an ordinary epithet of Bel, the Βῆλος ἀρχαῖος of Babylonian mythology, and therefore intimately connected with the thought of *time*². It *Probable connexion of Zervan with the Bel of Babylon.*

¹ See Sir H. Rawlinson's paper in the *Journ. As. Soc.* xv. 245, n. 2.

² The word *Zervána*, according to Spiegel, l. 271, signifies *old* (not 'time' merely), and so would be

a fair translation of the Semitic זְרָנָא, which is found distinctly in Bel-itan, or Old Bel. Spiegel in this matter has arrived at very much the same result as Rawlinson, but

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is accordingly conjectured, that the knowledge of this great divinity, who, under the descriptive name *Bel-itan*, or 'Old Bel,' was once supreme in ancient Babylonia, had passed over to the Scythic magi, at a period when the different populations of that region were extensively intermingled. Thence the Zervan-dogma may have penetrated into Media, so that the divinity, connected by Herodotus¹ with 'the cycle of the heavens,' and incorrectly represented by him as of 'Persian' origin, might really correspond with the great Bel of ancient Babylonia: and at length when the amalgamation was completed in the Magian and Persian creeds, and it was necessary to adjust the relative functions and positions of such gods as Zervan and Ormazd, a further precedent might be derived from the traditions of the Babylonian Semites, who had learned to venerate not only a supreme divinity (the Βῆλος ἀρχαίος), but also a reflection of him, called the Βῆλος δεύτερος, or the 'Assyrian Hercules'².

The Parsee belief in unity;

In any case we are at liberty to argue that faint glimmerings of one only God,—inert, indeed, if not impersonal, but still the Primal Cause of all things—are discernible here and there in the remains of Medo-Persian heathenism; and certainly such a dogma, whether viewed as the reanimation of some patriarchal tenet, or as due to interchanges

by a different process. He contends especially for the Semitic origin of the Zervan-dogma, from the fact that the name *Zerovanes* itself has been preserved in Berosus among the fragments of the Babylonian mythology.

¹ I. 131, where Mr Blakesley suspects that the historian is following the 'account of some person who

confused the genuine Persian with a Median [*i. e.* Magian] ritual.'

² 'Beide, der erste und zweite Bel, eben so wie Zarvan und Ormuzd, werden in einer Beziehung identificirt und in der andern unterschieden. Ahuramazda als der Absolute, Ewige, Ueberweltliche gedacht...ist der Zarvan-akarana.' Schlottmann, in Weber's *Ind. Stud.* I. 378, 379.

of religious thought with Scythic and Semitic tribes, or as the product of a speculative yearning to resolve all contrarieties of the visible world into an ultimate and higher unity, is often traceable in the literature of modern Parsees¹.

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Yet, on the other hand, so long as our chief guides into this region are the sacred books of ancient Persia, and the monuments belonging to the age of Darius Hystaspis, we are no less under the necessity of urging in reference to *Zervána-akarana*², that his worship was unknown to all the early generations of the Áryan settlers. He must therefore be eliminated from discussions of the Perso-Áryan theology; and the rather, since his name, whenever first admitted in that system, had produced in it no sensible effect. *Zervána* was from first to last a colourless abstraction, which Parsees are even now accustomed to esteem the mere equivalent of 'eternity.'

not, however, traceable in the Avesta.

¹ The following extract from Mr Dosabhoj Framjee's work *The Parsees*, pp. 250, 251, will remind some readers of the strong assertions made by Ram-mohun Roy and other half-Christianised Hindús as to the primitive theology of the Védas: 'The religion propounded by him [Zoroaster] is a simple form of theism, recognising but one God, the Creator, Ruler, and Preserver of the universe, without form, invisible. To Him is assigned a place above all, and to Him every praise is to be given for all the good in this world, and all the blessings we enjoy. Zoroastrianism does not require any image of God to be made for the purpose of worship, as to Him is attributed no form, shape or colour. He is an im-

mense light, from which all glory, bounty and goodness flow. He is represented as the mightiest, the most just, and the most benevolent. His mercies are as boundless as His being. The adoration or worship of any other object is blasphemous.' The author of such language would most probably explain the countless 'invocations' addressed in the Yasna to the various forms of created nature as no more than pious remembrances of high and noble objects: cf. Wilson, *Parsi Religion*, pp. 265 sq.

² Rawlinson and Spiegel are quite at one on this point. The latter writes (*Avesta*, Exc. I. 271): 'In dem ganzen persischen ursprünglichen Religionssysteme ist diese Lehre ein Misston.'

CHAP.
III.Ormazd
and Ahri-
man.

If we, accordingly, neglect this foreign and intrusive element, we find that the theology derivable from the pages of the Avesta¹ is, in form at least, completely *dualistic*. A belief in two great principles, of rival power and contradictory functions, is conspicuously set forth in every portion of those writings, or at least in all the portions where the language of the worshipper does not betray the influence of incurable polytheism. The rival principles of Medo-Persia are *Ahura-mazda*² (Ormazd), the good divinity, and *Ağra-mainyus* (Ahriman), the 'Evil-minded.'

Attributes
of Ormazd.

Now with reference to Ormazd, it must be granted that he is not only, in accordance with his title, 'god of the Aryans,' but has also been at times invested with high honours and prerogatives which suffice almost to lift him to the rank of the Supreme Intelligence. He is the sovereign judge, the sovereign excellence, the sovereign knowledge: 'greatest, best, most beautiful, the strongest, most intelligent, most graceful, and most holy'. Every thing, so far as it is elevated in its aim, and noble in its nature, was the product of his hand: he is the 'Maker of the pure creation;' more exalted than the brilliant, fertilising Mithra, ruler of a spacious province, and gifted with ten thousand eyes;

¹ The monuments are not included in this statement, because with one exception where the 'god of lies' is glanced at, they contain no traces of the Persian dualism. Their silence, however, with regard to Ahriman is well explained in Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, Vol. I. p. 427, n. 4, where we are reminded that 'the public documents of modern coun-

tries make no mention of Satan.'

² On the various etymologies of this word, see Burnouf, *Commentaire sur le Yaçna*, pp. 70 sq.; Wilson, *Parsi Religion*, p. 110. Another name or title of Ormazd, viz. *Spento-mainyus*, 'the Holy-minded,' brings him into more direct antagonism with the 'Evil-minded.'

³ *Vendidad*, Farg. XIX. § 47.

superior also to the holy Sraōsha, the author of abundance, bearing in his hand the instruments of vengeance to chastise a multitude of evil spirits¹. One example taken from the Yasna² will exhibit all these varied characteristics in a single group: 'I invoke and celebrate the creator Ahura-mazda, luminous, resplendent, best and greatest, excellent in strength and in perfection, most intelligent, most lovely, eminent in purity, possessing the good knowledge, source of pleasure, who created us, who fashioned us, who feeds us, most accomplished of intelligent beings.'

In the train of this divinity, or at times associating with him as possessors of the same exalted nature, are six other spiritual beings, genii of the world of light. The common name 'amshaspand' (*amesha-spenta*, or 'immortal holy one') is equally applied to all these seven intelligences; each has special days in every month devoted to his honour; though expressions, we must also grant, are never wanting where Ormazd is ranked indefinitely above the others, and regarded as the luminous chief and 'lord of the amshaspands³.' It is probable, as hinted in a previous chapter⁴, that this frequent limitation of the 'holy ones' to *seven* has reference to the primitive worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, and the five planets. Light,

*Amshas-
pands:*

*their pro-
bable ori-
gin,*

*in light-
worship.*

¹ *Ibid.* §§ 51—53: cf. Spiegel's *Studien*, in *Zeitch. Deutsch. morg. Gesell.* v. 223, 224. In a passage there translated from the *Minokhired* (a work of the Sassanian age) we notice an endeavour to establish some original co-operation between Ormazd and Zervāna-akarana: 'Der Schöpfer Ormazd erschuf diese Welt und

Creaturen und Amshaspande und den himmlischen Verstand aus seinem eigenen Lichte und mit dem Jubelrufe der unendlichen Zeit.'

² Burnouf, *Comment.* p. 146.

³ Wilson, as above, p. 129. On the names of the *amshaspands*, see Burnouf, as before, pp. 147—174.

⁴ Above, p. 52.

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in its most elemental form, had fascinated the imagination of the early Aryan, and at first, perhaps as the appropriate symbol of the Godhead, had suggested the generic name of his divinities¹. The sun-god (Savitri) was celebrated by the Hindú poet in the oldest of the Vaidic hymns; and consequently when his kinsmen paid their homage to the gorgeous sky of Persia, it was not unlikely that they all continued to associate some ideas of the invisible world with the more brilliant of the heavenly bodies. The great lord of light, proceeding on his course in peerless dignity and beauty, was the 'eye' of Ormazd himself; the lesser lights were his attendants, shining by his splendour and executing his behests; and thus in spite of all the systematising of the first mythology which resulted in the formal 'dualism of Zoroaster,' the old practice² of ascribing personality to sun and moon and stars, and so exalting them to objects of religious worship, was perpetuated in the Persian system to the close of its existence.

The Evil-minded One.

But as physical light appears to be involved in deadly strife with physical darkness, so the glory of Ormazd was ever liable to diminution and eclipse beneath the shade of Ahriman, his lying, 'evil-minded,' and corrupting adversary. In the strength imparted to such contrasts by the Medo-Persian creed consists its grand peculiarity³.

¹ Part II. pp. 12, 13.

² The following is M. Burnouf's version of a hymn in the *Yasna* (*Comment.* p. 375): 'Je célèbre, j'invoque Ahura et Mithra, élevés, immortels, purs; et les astres, créations saintes et célestes; et l'astre Taschter (Tis-

trya), lumineux, resplendissant; et la lune, qui garde le germe du taureau; et le soleil, souverain, coursier rapide, œil d'*Ahura-mazda*; Mithra, chef des provinces.'

³ Sir H. Rawlinson has gone so far as to conjecture that it was the

We must not suppose, indeed, with some living writers, that dualism was utterly unknown in all other heathen countries. Typhon's place in reference to Osiris was in many points analogous to that of Ahriman, the rival of Ormazd¹. The Bráhma, also, could discourse of deep and irremediable antagonisms between the laws of matter and of spirit; and in some of the non-Aryan tribes of India², to say nothing of American and other distant parallels, the two great members of the pantheon are the Sun, or light-god, and his wife, the Earth; the latter being adverse to the former as evil to good, yet both of them esteemed the fitting objects of religious worship. Still the shape assumed by Persian dualism is so peculiar, the antagonistic forces are so nearly balanced, and the contrast has been carried out so rigorously in its details, that we are justified in treating this as a distinctive feature in the history of religious thought.

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III.

*Dualism
not pecu-
liar to Per-
sia.*

In Persia also, even more than Egypt³, the relations of the two chief gods reflect the physical circumstances of the country and the struggles of the early population. While their brethren on the Sutej were invoking Indra and his host to aid in the expulsion of the dark-complexioned 'Dasyus,' the first settlers in Iran were waging a like con-

*Iran and
Turan.*

rise of this 'dualistic heresy' which led to the original disruption of the Aryan tribes.

¹ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, after describing the malignity of Typhon, proceeds (c. XLVI.) to speak of Zoroastrian dualism as something akin to that of Egypt: but Mr Kenrick (*Anc. Egypt*, I. 419) argues that the contrast was less

definitely established in the Egyptian system; for if not 'we should find other gods whose attributes are beneficent assailed by other Typhons.'

² See the extracts from Major Macpherson's paper on the religion of the Khonds, in Part II. pp. 209, 210.

³ Above, pp. 62—64.

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III.

Evil cre-
ated by
Ahriman.

test with the 'hostile ones,' the *Tutryas*¹ (Turadians). Every inch they rescued from the natives was a triumph won from Ahriman by timely succours of Ormazd; while in the lengthened fluctuations of that contest they beheld an image of the warfare ever raging in the spirit-world, where powers of good and evil, moral light and moral darkness, had alternate mastery. As from the fiat of Ormazd proceeded all the good things of creation, Ahriman had the terrific privilege of *creating* and transmitting evil². Every thing that tended to impede the propagation of life and purity and light, or interrupted the benignant flow of order and prosperity, was imputed to the envious rage of the arch-demon, ever battling from a species of necessity within the borders of his rival. One of these co-ordinate powers was thus an object of desire and reverence, and as such received the willing homage of all worshippers, the frequent prayer, the grateful offering; while, on turning towards Ahriman, the object of men's dread and horror, prayer itself was changed to abject deprecation, and sacrifice became no better than a weapon or a charm for warding off calamity³. To illustrate the old ideas

¹ Spiegel, in *Zeitsch. Deutsch. morg. Gesell.* v. 223. The Vaidic equivalent in *tārya*, 'hostile.'

² Thus in the opening Fargard of the *Vendidad*, as soon as it is mentioned that Ormazd had created any pure locality, the addition uniformly follows: 'Dann schuf eine Opposition desselben Agra-mainyus, der voll Tod ist.' After statements such as this, continually repeated in his own sacred books, it is difficult to understand how an intelligent writer

like Mr Dosabhoj Framjee (*Parsees*, p. 255) can argue that Ahriman 'should be taken in an allegorical sense, to denote the cause of the temptation under which man often falls into evil.' The *personality* of Ahriman is quite as clearly stated as the personality of Ormazd.

³ Plutarch, as before, c. XLVI. Among the other multitudinous objects invoked in the *Yama*, frequent mention is made of the *Izeds*, a class of gods or genii which at times are

on this subject, I may mention that a hideous serpent, which in Egypt was connected with Typhonic malice', was in Persia also the peculiar agent of the Evil-minded. Hence, indeed, arose the fancy that of salutary effects believed to flow in primitive times from the great homa-sacrifice the foremost was the generation of a warrior, who might slay 'the homicidal serpent, with three necks, with three heads, with six eyes, and with a thousand forces,—that remorseless god, who destroys purity, that sinner who ravages the worlds, whom Ahriman created the chief foe of purity, in the existing world, for the annihilation of the purity of the worlds¹.'

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III.

The homicidal serpent.

Exactly as the projects of Ormazd were carried out by six immediate ministers or colleagues, Ahriman ere long was made the centre of a circle of malignant spirits, sons of darkness; six of whom, the *devs* (*daévas*), stand arrayed in deadly strife against the luminous *amshaspands*. The two orders had thus formed so many pairs of strong antitheses: they personated in the one case high and

Devs, the antagonists of amshaspands.

scarcely distinguishable from the *Amshaspands*. They are saluted as 'the most worthy of the masters of purity, the most praiseworthy, the most pervading, the delight of the master, the pure master of purity.' The highest member of this order would appear to have been Mithra. We have again considerable difficulty in determining the precise nature and functions of another class of spirits mentioned in the Yasna, viz. the *Fervers* or *Fravashis*, which, although reminding us of guardian angels and good genii, are more properly considered as ideal prototypes of actual

intelligences (cf. Wilson, *Pârsî Religion*, pp. 130, 131). Every thing in nature, up to Ormazd himself (*Vendidad*, XIX. 46), has its own special *Ferver*: and occasionally such model beings were supposed to form a vast spiritual army fighting on the side of the good Principle, passing also between earth and heaven, and carrying the devotions of 'pure' men to the feet of Ormazd (Döllinger, *Heidenthum*, p. 362).

¹ Above, p. 69, n. 1.

² Translated by Burnouf, *Études*, 'Le Dieu Homa,' in *Journal Asiat.* (1844), IV. 493.

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III.

salutary properties, as life and goodness, truth and plenty, and the element of fire itself considered as a source of happiness; they personated in the other case destruction, malice, lying, penury, and elemental fire that shrivels and devours.

*Dualism,
regarded as
absolute or
as tempo-
rary.*

The question now is, Are we justified in speaking of the Persian form of dualism as absolute and eternal? Were the powers in conflict so equipotent, the elements of good so hopelessly and so inextricably blended with the elements of evil, that mankind must ever groan between the terrible contrariety?

Such is often said to be the character of genuine 'Zoroastrianism;' and little or nothing, I am bound to mention, is detected in the ancient books of Persia that necessitates an opposite conclusion. In those writings, the two kingdoms almost uniformly stand in harsh and absolute antagonism; on one side there is primal Good producing and reviving good, and on the other, primal Evil, which, possessed of a co-ordinate power, is working, and must ever work, disorder and decomposition. It appears, moreover, that belief in this most rigorous form of dualism had been perpetuated in a Persian sect entitled Magusæans, while the influence which it once exerted is perhaps still more distinctly to be traced in the projection of the Manichæan heresy.

*Manichæ-
ism.*

Mani, we should here remember, lived and taught at Babylon in the third century after Christ, and in the mythic names attributed to his pupils (Buddas¹, Thomas, Hermas) may be found not

¹ The old reading *Addas* is now corrected into *Buddas* (Lassen's *Ind. Alt.* III. 406).

only proof of his reputed influence, but allusion to particular systems of belief which he attempted, not long after the Sassanian revival, to amalgamate with the Ormazd-religion. CHAP.
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It is foreign to our purpose to inquire in what degree the Buddhist, Christian, and Hellenic elements were intermixed¹ by him with genuine 'Zoroastrianism;' but as none of those foreign systems can be charged with teaching the dogma of two opposite and co-eternal principles, we may conclude that in the view of Mani, who insisted ever on such dogma, it was held to be a genuine heirloom of the ancient Persian worthies. On the other hand, as Mani himself is said to have been barbarously put to death upon the charge of falsifying the pure religion of Zoroaster, we are not at once entitled to draw positive inferences, as to the early character of that religion, from accounts which have descended to us of the Manichæan heresy. *Relation of
Manichæ-
ism to
Zoroastri-
anism.*

It must, indeed, be granted that so far as our particular question is concerned, the language used by Persians in the fifth century after Christ again implied a prevalent disposition to reduce all contrarieties of the physical and moral world into an abstract unity. For that Zervanism was then at least a primary article of their faith, the following extract from the proclamation² of a Persian general (A.D. 450) will abundantly establish: *Fresh
traces of
the doctrine
of unity.*

¹ F. C. Bauer, *Das Manichäische Religionsystem*, followed, in the main, by Lassen, contends that in those particulars where Manichæism separated itself from the 'doctrine of Zoroaster,' it came nearer to Hindú systems and especially to

Buddhism. On the strange way in which Zoroaster (*Zaradhris*), Buddha, Christ and Mani were associated on a level by some of the Mediæval Manichæans, see Part I. p. 32, n. 2.

² The author of it was Mihr Nerseh, grand vizier of Iran. It was

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*Mythe connecting
Zervan
with Ormazd and
Ahriman.*

“Before the heavens and the earth were, the great god Zruan (Zervan) prayed a thousand years, and said, ‘If I, perhaps, should have a son named *Vormist* (Ormazd), who will make the heavens and the earth.’ And he conceived two in his body, one by reason of his prayer, and the other because he said *Perhaps*. When he knew that there were two in his body, he said, ‘Whichever shall come first, to him will I give over my sovereignty.’ He who had been conceived in doubt passed through his body and went forth. To him spake Zruan: ‘Who art thou?’ He said, ‘I am thy son *Vormist*.’ To him said Zruan: ‘My son is light and fragrant breathing; thou art dark and of evil disposition.’ As this appeared to his son exceedingly harsh, he (Zruan) gave him the empire¹ for a thousand years. When the other son was born to him, he called him *Vormist*. He then took the empire from *Ahriman*, gave it to *Vormist*, and said to him, ‘Till now I have prayed to thee, now thou must pray to me.’ And *Vormist* made heaven and earth; *Ahriman* on the contrary brought forth evil.”

addressed to the Armenians, and has been preserved in the *History of Vartan* by an Armenian bishop Elisæus (pp. 11, 12, translated by Neumann, Lond. 1830). The account respecting Zervan and the two derived intelligences (Ormazd and Ahriman) agrees substantially with that transmitted by another Armenian writer of the 5th century after Christ: see the *Réfutation des Sectes*, par Eznig, pp. 75 sq. (translated into French by De Florival, Paris, 1853). Döllinger (p. 360, note) has also pointed out distinct allusions to

the same mythe in Theodore of Mopsuestia, who says, in speaking of Zervan (ἀρχηγὸν πάντων), that while making a libation († of the homa-plant), *ὡς τέκη τὸν Ὀρμύζδαν, ἔτεκε ἑκείνον καὶ τὸν Σατανάν*.

¹ The priority of birth and empire here attributed to the Evil One has a most striking parallel in the dualistic system of the Bogomiles (of the 12th century after Christ): see Hardwick's *Middle Age*, pp. 302 sq. There also Satanael is the first-born, and is entrusted for a season with the chief administration of the world.

In accordance with the hopeful spirit that gave being, both to this and other kindred mythes, the reign of the good Principle, though subsequent in point of time, was represented as far mightier and more lasting than the reign of evil. Ahri-man, the child of doubt, shall be hereafter superseded¹. On the expiration of some dark millenium, he shall cease to be the terror of all pure and upright beings, while his rival, raised to the administration of the kingdom, shall create a second order of superior spirits, or at least initiate some remedial process, by which all things now existing may revert to their original condition. In other words, the ancient Persian could descry beneath the manifold contradictions of the actual world an aboriginal unity, nay, could hear amid them all the promise of some blessed restoration.

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III.

Moral import of such mythes.

Faint, indeed, and broken were the whispers of that promise. Often the mere echo of instinctive longings under which the heart of man had ached in every region of the ancient world, it was devoid of all historic basis, and was pointing onward to no definite fulfilment; yet in spite of its intrinsic weakness, and in spite of all the clouds in which it was involved by desperate speculations on the origin of evil, a belief in some such promise,—a belief

Hope of ultimate triumph.

¹ These peculiarities of the later Persian creed are fully established in passages brought to light by J. Müller, in 1843, and subsequently considered by Spiegel, in the *Zeitschrift der Deutsch. morgenländ. Gesellschaft* (1851), v. 225. One of such passages affirms in reference to Ahri-man: 'Aber es wird eine Zeit sein, wo sein Schlagen aufhört.'

And in a second, after describing the effects of the Evil Principle, it is added: 'Es war (eine Zeit), da er nicht war in diesen Geschöpfen, und es wird sein (eine Zeit), da er nicht sein wird in den Geschöpfen.' The same idea of Ahri-man's eventual overthrow occurs in Plutarch, *De Isid. et Osir.* c. XLVII.

CHAP. in the superior majesty of truth and her eventual
 III. triumph,—had been always lingering in the Persian mind. We may hereafter have occasion to observe that under the Sassanian monarchs, some at least of the more popular traditions on this subject bore no slight resemblance to the Messianic prophecies transmitted in the Hebrew Church.

*Armour of
the holy
man of
Persia.*

As special virtue had been constantly ascribed to *words* of Ormazd, it was by these, as parts of his offensive armour, that the good man was commissioned to do battle with the swarming hosts of darkness. For example, when the Evil One demanded¹ of Zarathustra ‘By whose word wilt thou smite, by whose word wilt thou destroy?’ the ‘holy man’ is said to have replied: ‘A mortar and a bowl, the *homa* and the words which Ormazd has spoken, these are my best weapons.’ Nor did victory over Ahriman consist in mere escape from present physical suffering, and in larger and more sparkling cups of temporal prosperity². Here the Persian, of historic times at least, was far superior to his kinsman whose importunate prayer for cows and horses and the like was heard pervading all the oldest invocations of the Vêda. In the measure of her moral sensibility, Persia may be fairly ranked among the brightest spots of ancient heathendom.

*Largeness
of spirit,
a distin-
guishing
feature of
the Ormazd-
religion.*

The ‘holy man,’ indeed, of the Avesta, is often a mere synonym for ‘worshipper of Ormazd,’ yet excellence, it should not be forgotten, is confined no longer to descendants of a priestly class severed by impassable gulphs from all below them:

¹ *Vendidad*, xix. 28—32, where I follow Spiegel’s version: cf. x. 25, sq. In § 28 we are told ‘Dies sind die Worte, welche alle Daevas schla- gen.’
² Cf. Part II. p. 17.

not to the possessor of recondite knowledge, and the lordly founder of some philosophic school; not even to the ardent devotee recoiling from the din and business of the world, and seeking in the silence of the jungle a sure refuge from its perils and seductions. Purity is there made possible for all: in all it is connected with incessant warfare, and in all dependent on exact conformity to the Ormazd-religion, 'in thought, in word, in deed.' Deflection from its precepts is the only cause of permanent disaster. Servants of Ormazd, unfortified by prayer and sacrifice, may yield to the temptations of the Evil One, and as the fruit of their misdeeds may undergo a lengthened term of penance. The body also must in every case eventually succumb beneath the iron yoke of death, the ruthless minister of Ahriman, and then communicate a portion of its own 'impurity' to all who come in contact with it. Still so long as any man was held to have continued in the number of the 'pure,' it was believed that saving efficacy issued to his spirit from the law of Ormazd; that law 'taking away all the evil thoughts, words and actions of a pure man, as the strong fleet wind purifies the heaven'.¹

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A cursory glance at precepts and prescriptions of the *Vendidad* will serve, however, to convince us that in Persia, as in Egypt, the idea of 'purity' had always been extremely superficial and unspiritual. It involved but little more than a punctilious compliance with established rites and ceremonies. Starting from the thought that every thing in nature was intrinsically either 'clean' or 'unclean,'

*Persian
ideas of
purity.*

¹ *Vendidad*, III. 149.

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III.

*Practical
character
of the Old
Persian.*

—a production either of Ormazd the good divinity, or else of the impure arch-demon,—the Old Persian was at least as anxious to escape from bodily defilement¹, or from contact with material things possessed by Ahriman, as to exemplify the higher moral qualities of which that Evil One had introduced the hideous negations. On the other hand, it is apparent that the consciousness of an unceasing conflict in the spirit-world had kept alive the habit of discriminating between moral light and moral darkness, and produced in many hearts a deep abhorrence of the evil, and a resolute yearning after good. The Persian had been commonly one of the least compromising, if not also the most active and most truthful, nations of antiquity². Accustomed to regard the universe in general as one mighty battle-field, the genuine worshipper of Ormazd had also tenanted his own immediate sphere with foes innumerable: his mission was to aid in counteracting the unwearied malice of the *devs*, to vindicate the cause of right and truth against the advocates of wrong and falsehood; and the stern intolerant spirit breathed by despots like Cambyzes indicates the natural product of that system of religion, when directed by unflinching hands.

¹ On this subject, see, for instance, *Vendid.* vii. 193—196. Rhode (*Die heilige Sage des Zendvolks*, pp. 453 sq. Frankfurt, 1820) in discussing such passages attempts to establish an absolute identity of view in the Avesta and the Old Testament: but whatever may be urged with regard to some particulars, there is certainly not a word in the Books of Moses to justify the supposition

that any creature is *essentially* unclean, or that certain animals are produced by the creative energy of an Evil Principle.

² Burnouf, *Études*, in the *Journ. Asiat.* (1840), p. 324, regards the importance assigned to the 'sentiment of human personality and morality' as the best feature of 'Zoroastrianism.'

Indeed the Persian monarchs may be fitly taken as at once the visible centres and the highest practical illustrations of the Medo-Persian theology. Unchecked alike by the intrigues and admonitions of a dominant priesthood, such as that which flourished at the ancient court of Oude, or Thebes, or Memphis, they stood forward the supreme reflections, if not actual incarnations, of the glory of Ormazd¹. The warm and flexible polytheism of their subjects had been earnestly directed towards them². They seemed to be entrusted with the sole administration of the light-kingdom, as the Pharaohs of an earlier period were the children of the Sun³. Their court was an inferior copy of the court of Ormazd: on grand or critical occasions they convoked a solemn council, the idea of which, in form and number, had been borrowed from the brilliant circle of divine amshaspands; and as 'words of Ormazd' himself were deemed most sacred and oracular, the law of ancient Persia had been taken from the lips of her great despot, who by placing his own signet on the harshest of decrees could render them irrevocable.

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III.

High position of the Persian kings.

King-worship.

¹ Thus, when Themistocles (Plutarch. *Them.* c. xxvii.) wished to be presented to the king, he was told by the Persian Artabanus that he must first submit to offer worship 'to the image of god the preserver of all things,' (i.e. of Ormazd). Curtius (VIII. 5) in like manner, says expressly, 'Persas reges suos inter deos colere:' see Hengstenberg,

Genuineness of Daniel, pp. 103 sq. Edinb. 1847.

² Arrian, *Alex.* IV. 11, mentions a report that this προσκύνησις began with Cyrus: Δέγεται τὸν πρῶτον προσκυνηθῆναι ἀνθρώπων Κύρον καὶ ἐπὶ τῷδε ἐμμεῖναι Πέρσαις τε καὶ Μήδοις τήνδε τὴν ταπεινότητα.

³ Above, p. 38.

CHAPTER IV.

Alleged Affinities of the Medo-Persian Creed to Hebraism and Christianity.

Οὕτω λέγει Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς τῷ χριστῷ μου Κύρῳ, οὐδ' ἐκράτησα τῆς δεξιᾶς...
'Ἐγὼ Κύριος ὁ Θεός, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι πλὴν ἐμοῦ θεός. ἐνίσχυσά σε, καὶ
οὐκ ἤδεις με. ἵνα γνῶσιν οἱ ἀπ' ἀνατολῶν ἡλίου καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ δυσμῶν, ὅτι
οὐκ ἔστι θεὸς πλὴν ἐμοῦ. ἐγὼ Κύριος ὁ Θεός, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι. ἐγὼ δ'
κατασκεύασας φῶς, καὶ ποιήσας σκότος, ὁ ποιῶν εἰρήνην, καὶ κτίζων κακὰ.
ἐγὼ Κύριος ὁ Θεός, ὁ ποιῶν πάντα ταῦτα. Is. xlv. 1—7. (LXX.)

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IV.

*The Great
Captivity.*

THE second period in her life-time when the Hebrew Church was forced into more lasting and direct communication with the heathen of surrounding countries must be dated from the middle of the eighth century before the Christian era. As the prelude to a general deportation of the Ten Tribes, the settlers in the Trans-Jordanic province had been carried captive to Assyria under Tiglath-Pileser (2 Kings xv. 29); and at length, about the year 600, a large portion of the feeble remnant, stricken by a like calamity, had run the risk of being quite extinguished under the tremendous despotism, which formed in every age a vivid type of the ungodlike and unchrist-like,—Babylon the Great.

*Causes of
it.*

The exile was itself, however, the effect¹, and not the cause, of cravings after 'all the abominations of the heathen.' From the period of the Exodus the leaders of the Hebrew nation had been ever struggling with this downward, retro-

¹ See above, pp. 142—145.

gressive, tendency. 'The Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes and sending...but they mocked the messengers of God and despised His words and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy' (2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16.) Yet penal though it was, the isolation of the Hebrews in the 'wilderness of the nations' had been also meant as a corrective discipline, and actually conduced by visible stages to the culture and the exaltation of the Church. Henceforth, as Jew and Christian have alike acknowledged, there was far less disposition to relapse into the bondage of the old polytheism. Closer contact with the creed and institutions of his heathen taskmasters had wakened in the spirit of the Hebrew exile a more deep and passionate longing not for Salem only, but the worship of his fathers' God. He bowed no more in adoration of the graven image, nor of elements and heavenly bodies: he no longer substituted a personification of recurring processes in animal or vegetable nature for the 'God of the spirits of all flesh.' It is again observable that the trying period of captivity, when the Hebrew could no longer celebrate the ritual worship of his fathers, was selected as the aptest time¹ for inculcating lessons of Divine wisdom on the subject of a new œconomy and a truer service of the heart: while prophecies of the Messiah, in accordance with the law of progress and expansion which obtains in all their earlier stages, had been now detached more plainly from the thought of national

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IV.

*Effects of
it.*

*New phases
of doctrine.*

¹ Part I. pp. 147—149.

CHAP. triumph or disaster, and invested with their fullest
IV. form and their most spiritual expression.

Modern theories respecting the effect of the Captivity.

But while sacred writers on the one hand trace that exile to the heathenish temper of the chosen people, and attribute on the other hand the restoration of the Hebrews to a signal act of mercy following their profound repentance, the assailants of revealed religion have persisted in affirming that the sojourn of the Jews in Babylonia was the time when, most of all, they had deflected from the creed of Abraham and David, when the priest and prophet also, equally besotted by the popular love of heathenism, had joined in the adulteration of the choicest truths committed to their keeping. With the sole exception of a faithful remnant, whose descendants must be sought for (it is now discovered) in the sect of the Sadducees, the great community returned from Babylon, so infected with the superstitions of the foreign despot, that the doctors of the subsequent period (not excepting Christ and the Apostles) had been all unable or unwilling to shake off the dominant delusion. As the traces of Egyptian heathenism were freely pointed out, by this class of critics, in the ritual institutions of the ancient Hebrew, they proceed to argue that a worse corruption in respect of doctrine had resulted from his long familiarity with the Zendic literature of Medo-Persia.

With what form of heathenism were the Hebrews brought in contact?

Now in estimating this momentous question it is doubtless of the first importance to observe that any influences exerted on the Hebrews by the votaries of the Ormazd-religion must have always, in the period of the exile, been extremely slender

and indirect. The principal scene of transportation was *not* Persia Proper; and although the natives of some Median cities where those exiles were dispersed might then have been, in part at least, related ethnologically to their Perso-Aryan neighbours, the religion which prevailed in Media¹, before the accession of Darius Hystaspis, and perhaps still later, was the element-worship of the Scythic Magi,—not the formal and elaborate dualism connected with the name of Zoroaster and proclaimed at large in the Avesta. It would further seem that actual conquerors of the Hebrew nation, the Assyrians or Chaldæo-Babylonians, *not* the Medo-Persians, are the people to whose creed we should most reasonably turn in searching for an explanation of the change alleged to have passed over the theology of the conquered. Is there, then, enough of general similarity in the ideas of ancient Babylonians and of Hebrews after the Captivity, to warrant us in carrying this investigation far into details? I answer, that no contrast could have well been greater. The mythology of Babylonia from the oldest period to the Achæmenian conquest² will exhibit scarcely any trace of dualism, which forms, as we have seen, the most distinctive property of the Persian system, and which Hebrews are supposed to have eventually adopted. That religion, on the contrary, had ever been ‘a very

*General
character
of Baby-
lonian my-
thology.*

¹ See above. pp. 153, 154.

² Its main identity at very different periods is affirmed by Sir H. Rawlinson, *Journ. As. Soc.* xv. 253, n. 3. In a special Essay on the subject (Rawlinson's *Herod.* i. 584 sq.) the absence of all trace of dualism is more distinctly pointed out.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable features of the Babylonian mythology is the high rank there awarded to the Moon-god: see Part III. p. 130, where moon-worship, as exemplified in old religions of America, is connected with the thought of some great evil principle.

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gross polytheism,' which is said in general grouping to have borne no small resemblance to 'the mythological systems of Greece and Rome¹;' and therefore must have differed *toto cœlo* from the creed of the Old Testament, alike before and after the Babylonish captivity. I shall accordingly dismiss at once the oft-repeated fallacy which professes to connect the Hebrew exiles with the advocates of the Ormazd-religion, or, despairing of this pretext, throws together into one the motley tenets of Magi, of Perso-Aryans and of Babylonians, gives the general name of 'dualism' to the incongruous compound, and concludes by arguing that the Jews who 'spent the long years of their captivity' in the midst of it 'returned not unimbuéd with the superstitions of their masters.'

*Existence
of resem-
blances be-
tween the
Hebrew
and Per-
sian sys-
tems.*

The unfairness of such arguments must not, however, tempt us to deny the fact that striking parallelisms do really exist between traditions now surviving in the sacred books of Persia and some doctrines of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. What may be the real ground of such resemblances, the age when they are first apparent, and the aspect they are calculated to assume in reference to the character and claims of Christianity, are questions calling for minute investigation: but since no competent scholar is prepared to say that the *Avesta* in its present shape is clearly traceable further back than the third century after Christ, and since the

¹ Rawlinson's *Herod.* i. 586.

² This is done, for instance, in Dr Donaldson's *Christian Orthodoxy*, p. 102, where, unconscious, it would seem, of the confusion, he informs the

reader that 'dualism was the creed of the Medes, Persians and *Babylonians*.' If by 'creed of the Medes' we are to understand pure 'Magism,' the assertion is still further incorrect.

fact is growing more indisputable every year that a variety of Semitic, if not Christian, elements were intermingled with the faith as well as with the language and literature of the Sassanian period, we are surely not at liberty to urge, before a strict examination of particulars, that traces of revealed religion which exist in sacred books of Persia must be treated as in every case original, and as proving the existence of an imitative spirit only in the Jewish nation. It is antecedently as probable that the Persian borrowed largely from the Hebrew as that the Hebrew borrowed from the Persian.

If resemblances in question should be found too many or too minute to be regarded as entirely accidental,—such, that is, as men might, under similar circumstances, have originated independently of each other,—three suppositions can alone be urged in explanation of the strange phenomena. We may hold that the traditions common to the Persian and Hebrew (1) are equally a portion of ‘original truth,’ which both alike inherited from fathers of the human family: or (2) the Persians, at the period of the exile, and still more in later and post-Christian times, when their own system reached its full proportions, were conversant in some degree with Hebrew and Christian learning: or (3) the Jewish doctors in the course of their dispersion at, and after the Captivity, contracted an unnatural fondness for the sacred books of Persia.

(1) The first of these three suppositions may of course be held concurrently with the second; yet by many Christian writers of our own and foreign countries, it alone has been regarded as the key to the affinities we are considering. When the

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IV.

*Possible
accounts of
such resem-
blances.*

*Were they
due to
primitive
traditions?*

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IV.

genuine works of the Avesta, and still more the *Bundehesh*¹ itself, a Pehlevi compilation, were first brought to light by the adventurous Duperron, men were startled by the suddenness and brilliance of the grand disclosure. They beheld in it a series of most venerable relics, each at least coeval with the Persian monarchy. Nor at present, when it is completely ascertained that some of the results to which Duperron pointed with especial satisfaction were due to his inaccurate version of the sacred texts he had assisted in recovering, is there any lack of Christian writers who affirm that the traditions of the Avesta are well-nigh commensurate with those of the Old Testament. 'Of the King of Heaven' it is asserted² 'and the Father of eternal light, and of the pure world of light, of the eternal Word by which all things were created, of the seven mighty spirits that stand next to the throne of Light and Omnipotence, and of the glory of those heavenly hosts which encompass that throne; next, of the origin of evil and of the Prince of darkness, the monarch of those rebel-

¹ See above, p. 159.

² F. von Schlegel, *Phil. of History*, pp. 173, 174, where it is added: 'That with all these doctrines much may have been, or really was, combined, which the ancient Hebrews, and even we, would account erroneous, is very possible, and indeed may almost naturally be surmised; but this by no means impairs that strong historical resemblance we here speak of.' Dr Mill (*Christ. Adv. Publ.* for 1841, p. 62) in alluding to the preservation of original truth in various parts of heathendom, agrees with Schlegel in ranking

Persia far above most other regions; 'Such we find in nations most infected with polytheistic error: and much more we might well conceive to exist in one by which the grosser forms of idolatry were ever held in peculiar abhorrence: a nation whose greatest Prince is signally honoured by Divine prophecy [cf. the motto at the head of this chapter] in being named as the future restorer of God's people to their ancient seat: and whose sages were summoned from afar, before the great and wise of Israel, to adore the infant Redeemer.'

lions spirits—the enemies of all good; they [the Persians] in a great measure entertained completely similar, or at least *very kindred*, tenets to those of the Hebrews.’ We may see hereafter that all statements of this kind are both exaggerated and overcoloured; yet no student of the question who considers the proximity of Persia to the cradle of the human race and the existence of a similar cluster of traditions¹ in the kindred tribe of Indo-Aryans, will be likely to relinquish the belief that there, as well as in the darker depths of gentilism, the echoes of primeval truths had lingered ages after they had lost all practical effect.

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(2) The next hypothesis accounting for those common elements of thought and worship was at first supported mainly by insisting on the synchronism of Zoroaster and the Hebrew prophets of the Captivity; a further supposition being that if Daniel and Zoroaster had not actually communicated with each other, as doctor and disciple, the reputed author of the Avesta had at least been versed in ‘sacred writings of the Jewish religion.’ It was felt by the adherents of this view, especially when regard was had to the minute disclosures of the *Bundehesh*, that many representations so closely resemble ‘those of the Hebrew Scriptures, as to

*Were those resem-
blances due
to the ac-
tion of the
Hebrews
on the
Persians?*

¹ See Part II. ch. III.

² See, for instance, Prideaux, *Connection*, I. 216, Lond. 1718, who adds that the whole system was extracted thence; ‘only the crafty impostor took care to dress it up in such a style and form, as would make it best agree with that old religion of the Medes and Persians, which he grafted it upon.’ It is

curious to observe, in connexion with the prophet Daniel, and his influence on the heathen world, that persons are not wanting who identify him with the Hindú Buddha, and ascribe the appearance of Buddhism in Central India to the captivity and dispersion of the Jews. (*Journ. As. Soc.* XVI. 233.)

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leave no doubt of their real origin, through whatever channel ideas so analogous, or almost identical, can have been derived. The analogy is not of that kind which may be attributed to a similar derivation of tradition from a common source. It is more precise, and evidently belongs to a period not very remote¹. So long, however, as the history of Zarathustra is involved in the obscurity thrown over it by recent criticism, we are unable to refer the introduction of Semitic thoughts among the Medo-Persians to supposed effects of his communication with the Hebrew exiles. Like uncertainty is felt when we compare some striking texts of the Avesta with the kindred language of the Old Testament; for owing to the numerous gaps in Persian history and the changes which the Persian writings have undergone, there is good reason for suspecting the antiquity of certain passages on which our predecessors had implicitly relied. If, on the other hand, we start from the idea that many of the Persian stories which resemble Hebraism were not the product of remote ages, but obtained their earliest credit in the first three centuries after Christ, the history of the period will be found in many different ways to favour such hypothesis.

*Peculiar
state of
religious
feeling in
the first
three cen-
turies after
Christ.*

That age was characterised far more than all before it by a spirit of religious syncretism, an eager thirst for compromise². To mould together thoughts which differed fundamentally, to grasp

¹ Prichard, *Researches*, IV. 45, where, however, the so-called 'mythus of the Zendavesta' is taken chiefly from Rhode's uncritical work entitled *Die*

heilige Sage des Zendvolks (Frankfurt, 1820).

² Cf. Part I. pp. 29, 30.

if possible the common elements pervading all the multifarious religions of the world, was deemed the proper business of philosophy both in East and West. It was a period, one has lately said, 'of mystic incubation, when India and Egypt, Babylonia and Greece, were sitting together and gossiping like crazy old women, chattering with toothless gums and silly brains about the dreams and joys of their youth, yet unable to recall one single thought or feeling with that vigour which once gave it life and truth. It was a period of religious and metaphysical delirium, when everything became everything, when Máya and Sophia, Mithra and Christ, Viráf and Isaiah, Belus, Zarvan and Kronos were mixed up in one jumbled system of inane speculation, from which at last the East was delivered by the positive doctrines of Mohammed, the West by the pure Christianity of the Teutonic nations¹.' Out of this remarkable ferment of the human spirit issued both the *Bundeshesh* and the *Minokhired*, which though strongly Persian in their tone, are also strongly tinctured by Semitic and Hebraic notions. For Jews² on the destruction of the holy city planted some of their chief schools in Babylonia, and even were at times promoted to high places in the Persian court; in learned centres, like Edessa, were discussed the various tenets of all known religions, Christianity in the number; and the Gnostic Bar-desanes, writing from that city in the time of Marcus Aurelius, draws attention to the early

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*Influence
in Persia
of Jews,*

*of Chris-
tians,*

¹ M. Müller's 'Last Results of the Persian Researches,' as before, entirely in some of the expressions.
p. 119: although I cannot acquiesce ² Spiegel, *Avesta*, I. 17, 25.

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early here-
tics.

progress of the Gospel¹, not in Parthia and in Media only, but in Persia Proper and in Bactria. Passing by the other traces which the new religion left behind it in those far-off regions, we may notice as of vast importance the long-thriving sect of Manichæans, who accepted Christianity as the groundwork of their composite belief: while stress may equally be laid upon the fact that one favourite writing of the later 'Zoroastrians' is only a Parsee adaptation² of the apocryphal or quasi-Christian work entitled the *Ascension of Isaiah*; where the prophet, on recovering from his rapture, narrates a journey to the 'seventh heaven,' in which his eyes were gladdened by the vision of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, and beheld inscribed upon a roll the wondrous story of the birth and passion of the Saviour.

Were the
Hebrews
guilty of
corrupting
their old
religion?

(3) In exact proportion to the strength of the hypothesis just mentioned is the weakness of a third account which has been rendered of resemblances between the Persian and the Biblical traditions. Assuming even that the captive tribes were brought into familiar intercourse with the Ormazd-religion; assuming also that the Hebrew people as a body, still unweaned from old corruptions, had come back to Sion lusting after 'their fathers' idols;' in other words, assuming two positions which both militate against a long array of

¹ Euseb. *Præpar. Evangel.* VI. 10 (Vol. II. pp. 92, 93, ed. Gaisford): cf. Neander, *Ch. Hist.* I. 111.

² See the comparison between the two works (the *Arda-virâf-nâme* and the 'Αραβανικὸν Ἠσάλου) in Spiegel, as before, pp. 21 sq. His closing remark is: 'Die Verwandtschaft der

beiden Bücher wird wol Niemand ableugnen, doch scheint die christliche Gestaltung die ältere zu sein. Die Lehre von sieben Himmeln ist nicht persisch, die spätere Parsenlehre kennt blos drei, über ihnen ist der *Gorothmán*, die Wohnung Ahuramazdas.'

well-authenticated facts; we notwithstanding offer violence to all the probabilities of the question by supposing that Hebrew doctors, such as Daniel or Ezekiel, in whose eyes the exile was itself a penalty provoked by heathenish tendencies, should slide away into the superstitions either of their patrons or their taskmasters. The sentiment possessing them had always been: 'How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning;' and notable instances may be adduced where men of constancy like theirs could brave the fiercest rage of Babylon, the lions' den, the blazing furnace, rather than renounce their sacred nationality or 'worship any other god.'

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But with the view of justifying this main inference more completely, I propose to shew, by strict examination of particulars, that where a truly old relationship exists between the Hebrew and Persian systems, it is naturally explained on the hypothesis of aboriginal unity; and that in other cases there is either no true parallelism at all, or else that points of doctrine said to be imported by the later class of sacred writers, had been actually current in the Hebrew Church for centuries anterior to the Babylonish exile.

Conclusions to be established.

§ I. *The Fall of Man.*

According to the 'Persian Genesis' (the *Bundeheh*), the earliest representative of animal creation¹ was the primitive Bull (Goshurun), from

The primitive Bull.

¹ The different passages of the *Bundeheh* relating to this point are brought together in Rhode, *Die heilige Sage*, etc. pp. 383 sq.: cf. Döllinger, p. 367. It is also worthy of remark, that in the Persian story the

CHAP.
IV.*Meshia and
Meshiane ;**their tempt-
ation ;*

whose right shoulder, as he fell beneath the stroke of the malignant Ahriman, proceeded Kaiomorts, the first of human beings. This grand prototype of men, including in himself the properties of both the sexes, was in turn assaulted by the Evil One and finally destroyed by machinations of the *devs* ; but from the vital force inherent in him there sprang up a plant which yielded as its fruit the true progenitors of the human family (Meshia and Meshiane¹), or at least became the author of their bodily framework ; for the soul itself was held to draw its origin directly from nothing short of heaven. Endowed with noble qualities, man was bidden to approve himself the lord of this lower world, by cultivating 'purity' in thought, in word, in action, and by keeping up a constant warfare with his enemies the *devs*. At first the parents of mankind were humble, and, devoted to the service of Ormazd, were innocent and happy ; they were destined also to enjoy more perfect happiness ; but Ahriman, the sleepless enemy of man and 'purity,' descending earthwards in the fashion of a serpent,

account of man's fall is intimately connected with the cosmogonic theory which pervaded most other countries of the ancient world both Old and New (see Part III. pp. 160, 161). In Persia (at least according to one version of the matter) we have first a cycle of 3000 years, when Ormazd is absolute (cf. however, above, p. 176) ; then, a cycle of the same period, when Ahriman commences his attack upon the light-kingdom, but, abashed by the exceeding purity of the *fervers* of holy men (above, p. 172, n. 3), falls back into the dark abyss, and lies quiescent during

3000 years. At the expiration of this time, Ahriman becomes more bold and active ; and in the fourth period of 3000 years, completing the 'magnus annus' of the later Persians, Ahriman is, on the whole, ascendant and predominant.

¹ With these names compare the Sansk. *mánusha*, the Germ. *menach*, and the *mannus* of Tacitus, *German.* c. 2 ('Tuisconem deum, *terra editum*, *et filium Mannum*'). On the Egyptian *Menes*, and other similar forms, see above, p. 17, n. 2, and Dieffenbach, *Vergl. Wörterbuch der goth. Spr.* II. 32, 33, Frankfurt, 1851.

plotted their corruption, and ere long by means of fruit derived from his own province of creation, he seduced them from their true allegiance: they declared that all they saw was Ahriman's, and therefore grew, it is narrated, as wicked as himself.

Without dwelling¹ on the obvious kinship which exists between this story and the sacred narrative, it is worthy of especial notice that one form attributed in Persia to the Evil Principle, or at least one favourite organ used by him for man's undoing, is the serpent, of whose guile and malice traces are continually recurring in the farthest wilds of gentilism². Nor is this representation only to be met with in chapters of the *Bundehesh*: in genuine works of the Avesta also, the great 'homicidal serpent'³ is the object of men's dread and horror: while the Evil One himself is sometimes called 'the Serpent,' in direct allusion to his power of counter-acting the Good Principle. Thus, Ormazd is heard declaring in the *Vendidad*⁴: 'I am Ahura-mazda, I am the giver of good things. When I formed this dwelling-place, the beautiful, the brilliant, the

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and fall.

The form
of the
Tempter.

¹ I deem it quite superfluous, now that we can speak more positively about the age and origin of the *Bundehesh*, to answer such objections as those of Rhode and the older Rationalists, who used to affirm not only that the Mosaic version of the Fall was unintelligible without the Persian commentary, but also that the Hebrews had derived their knowledge of the whole tradition from a Persian source. Precisely the same kind of hardihood was shewn by Holwell and other sceptics, when they ventured to derive both Hebraism

and Christianity from the 'Hindú scriptures:' see Part II. p. 4, n. 1.

² See, for instance, the *Prose Edda*, § 34 (Mallet's *North. Antiq.* p. 423, Lond. 1847), where the second child of *Loki* (the Ahriman of Scandinavia) is the Midgard serpent, and the third *Hela* (Death).

³ Above, p. 173.

⁴ *Farg.* XXII. §§ 1—6, where Spiegel's note is: 'Dass Agra-mainyus eine Schlange genannt wird, kann nicht befremden, da er ja bekanntlich auch im *Bundehesh* unter dieser Form erscheint.'

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note-worthy, saying, I will go forth, I will go over, then the Serpent beheld me. Thereupon the Serpent Agra-mainyus, who is full of death, created, with an eye to *my* creation, nine sicknesses, and ninety, and nine hundred, and nine thousand and ninety thousand.'

§ 2. *Doctrine of the Evil One.**Satan and
Ahriman;*

This extract brings us to a question of very grave importance: Is the doctrine of a personal, superhuman, Tempter as now current in all branches of the Christian Church the product of religious intercourse which Hebrews had maintained with their enslavers at the time of the Captivity? Is the Satan of the Old and New Testament, in other words, a modern copy of the Ahriman of the Avesta? In replying to this question I shall not survey afresh the main historical probabilities arising on the one side from the nature of the Babylonian (as distinguished from the Medo-Persian) creed, and on the other from the stern, uncompromising spirit of the Hebrew worthies who were sharers in the exile of their nation. On internal grounds alone I hold it to be far more likely that the Persian dogma, as it stands conspicuous in the *Vendidad*, was the corruption and distortion of a primitive truth bequeathed by the first parents of the human family. For no one who is able to discriminate at all, will question that under the more obvious features of resemblance there is lying also a most vital contrariety between the Hebrew and Old Persian theories on the nature of the Evil One.

As Satan in our sacred books is far from being

the seductive spirit of the world, or of man's lower nature, 'conceived of in concrete personality'; so neither is he there esteemed an absolutely evil being, like the Ahriman of the Avesta, coeternal and coequal with the Good, and like the Good an independent centre of creative energy. Satan is a fallen *creature*, his fall involved like man's fall in impenetrable mystery, and yet a fall which in results which it entailed on the creation has its dark analogy in the first great fall of man, as well as in that fiendish satisfaction which the fallen still experience in communicating their own misery to others. In neither case, however, is the sovereignty of God at all impugned by the existence of ungodlike passions in the creature, and the partial triumph of the powers of evil. Jew and Christian, equally possessed by a belief that there is One, and only one, true Principle of Existence, would alike recoil with horror from the notion which exalted the arch-demon to equality with the supreme and unapproachable Jehovah. The feeling of them both, in later as in earlier times, has been, that Satan is a 'murderer' and a 'liar,' *not* because he

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how different from each other.

¹ See Dr Mill's masterly sermons 'On the Temptation' (Camb. 1844), especially Serm. III. Of late years Cambridge has been also fostering in her bosom the main champion of the heterodox belief. Dr Donaldson's work, entitled *Christian Orthodoxy*, is devoted in no small measure to the maintenance of a theory, which involves our Lord Himself, and with Him the whole Christian community of every period, in the charge of swerving from the old (or ante-Babylonian) doctrine of the He-

brew Church in reference both to fallen and unfallen angels (cf. Part I. p. 96, n. 1). The same tendency (strange to say) is manifested at the same time by the intelligent Parsee writer, above quoted (p. 172, n. 2); who in the teeth of the most cogent evidence is able to declare that the Ahriman of his forefathers was really impersonal, or, as some scholastics would express it, 'was merely the evil of the world *hypostasised*' (precisely Dr Donaldson's own position with regard to Satan).

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is the necessary antithesis of God, but simply because 'he *abides not* in the truth' of his original creation (St John viii. 44).

St Augustine and the Manichæans.

A most ample opportunity for testing both the genuineness and depth of this conviction had been offered on the rise and early progress of the Manichæan heresy. No countenance was given in East or West to figments of the Persian misbeliever. Then it was that St Augustine, who amid the moral and intellectual tempests of his youth had learned to fathom the abyss of human depravity, stood forward to unmask the sophistries beneath which Mani sought to introduce into the Church the dogma of Two Principles; and worthy of our special notice is it, that the arm which levelled the proud system of Pelagius when he ventured to extenuate the malignity of moral evil, was uplifted with the same gigantic vigour for the overthrow of Faustus, the great champion of the Manichæans².

Scriptural notices of the Tempter

Turning, then, directly to the books of Holy Scripture, what can we detect in it to justify the charges of its modern adversaries? Is there any discernible variation in the language used at different periods with regard to the existence of diabolic agents and the personality of the Tempter? Now I find no difficulty whatever in admitting, just as when the elementary conceptions of a future life

¹ See Dean Alford on this passage, who remarks that it is 'one of the most decisive testimonies for the objective personality of the devil. It is quite impossible,' he continues, 'to suppose an accommodation to Jewish views, or a metaphorical

form of speech, in so solemn and direct an assertion as this.'

² See, especially, the treatise *Contra Faustum, Manichæum* (Opp. x. 221 sq. Bassani, 1807), where several of the Manichæan arguments are also given at length.

were made the subject of discussion¹, that a steadier light may have been gradually thrown upon this question in successive stages of the Church's growth. The revelations of the Old Testament, and therefore more particularly of the earlier portions of it, were not absolute and ultimate. As centuries went over, many large accessions may be clearly dated in the measure of man's sacred knowledge. It is found accordingly that truths pertaining to the spirit-world have also gained a greater prominence and greater clearness of expression in 'the fulness of the times,' nay, even in the latest writings of the New Testament². It was our blessed Lord Himself, who in delivering the grand parable of the wheat and tares has singled out, for His direct antagonist, *the* wicked one; who told us also in His exposition that this wicked one is the Devil (St Matth. xiii. 39), and the reapers holy 'angels.' In like manner, one chief object of the Saviour's mission is declared to be the 'stripping from Himself of principalities and powers,' (Col. ii. 15)—the subjugation of those more than human adversaries, with which the Christian in his turn is summoned to do battle (Eph. vi. 12). 'The Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the Devil' (1 St John iii. 8),—the works of that 'old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan' (Rev. xx. 2). It is true that reasons

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*more vivid
in the New
Testament.*

¹ Above, pp. 137 sq.

² 'In the spiritual world, where the lights are brightest, the shadows are deepest; and instead of hearing less of Satan, as the mystery of the kingdom of God proceeds to unfold itself, in the last book of Scripture,

that which details the fortune of the Church till the end of time, we hear more of him [Satan], and he is brought in more evidently and openly working than in any other.'—Dean Trench, *On the Parables*, p. 84, Lond. 1844.

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might exist alike in the prevailing tendencies of Asiatic thought, and in the moral status of the Hebrew Church itself, explaining the comparative absence of allusion to such topics in the early writings of the Bible; 'till the mightier power of good was revealed we were in mercy not suffered to know how mighty was the power of evil!': yet to say that nothing is recorded of Satanic influence till the period of the Babylonish exile is the arbitrary assumption of determined theorists, aided in this matter by a rude and vulgar spirit of destructive criticism, which, guiding in old time the hands of Mani, could not rest till it had torn away the passages, and even books, of Holy Scripture² where resistance had been offered to his shameless innovation.

*Satan's
connexion
with the
Fall:*

In pointing to the earlier intimations of some diabolic agency, I need not touch again³ upon the ancient passage in Leviticus (xvi.), where *Azazel* is commonly believed to be another name for 'demon,' and is so indeed interpreted by modern writers, who, as soon as the admission has been made, re-

¹ *Ibid.* p. 83.

² Thus St Augustine aptly remarks (*De Utilitate Credendi*, c. 7), just after his own extrication from Manichean errors: 'Nunc vero postea quam mihi sunt exposita atque enodata multa, quæ me maxime movebant, ea scilicet in quibus illorum plerumque se jactat, et quo securius sine adversario eo effusius exsultat oratio, nihil mihi videtur ab eis *impudentius dici*, vel (ut mitius loquar) *incuriosius et imbecillius*, quam Scripturas divinas esse corruptas; cum id nullis in tam recenti memoria exstantibus exemplaribus possint convincere. Si enim dicerent, eas sibi *penitus accipiendas*

non putasse, quod ab his essent scriptæ, quos verum scripsisse non arbitrarentur, esset utcumque tergiversatio eorum rectior vel error humanior.' He then goes on to mention that they did reject the whole of the Acts of the Apostles, not for any critical reasons, but *because* the account there given would not square with their notions about the descent of the Holy Ghost on Mani: cf. Tertull. *De Præscript. Hæc.* c. xvii., where allusion is made to the arbitrary additions and subtractions of heresy, 'ad dispositionem instituti sui'.

³ See above, pp. 124 sq.

solve that being into 'a liturgical idea.' Neither shall I urge at length that he who finally bore the title of 'adversary' and 'calumniator' of the human race is called '*the Satan*,' and invested with peculiar guile and malice, in the opening of the Book of Job (i. ii.), no less than in the kindred vision of Zechariah (iii.), which belongs, unquestionably, to the age succeeding the Captivity. My present stand is rather on the sacred narrative of the Fall, which few, if any, even of our most daring critics, venture to bring down as low as the sixth century before the Christian era. Now if the true meaning of that narrative can be determined by consentient verdicts of Jewish and Christian writers, in all ages, it imports that man, through the extraneous solicitation of a personal seducer, and not merely through the motions of inborn concupiscence, was urged to the commission of the first dark sin which wrought disorder in himself, his children, and his species. That the visible agent of man's ruin was an *agent* merely in the hands of the great Evil One, St Paul has plainly intimated where he writes that the serpent who beguiled our first mother was the subtle, self-transforming potentate who is still active in the Christian Church (2 Cor. xi. 3, 14); and when the same Apostle turned with ardent hope to the eventual triumph of the Woman's Seed, his comfort flowed from a conviction that 'the God of peace will bruise *Satan* (not the serpent) under our feet shortly' (Rom. xvi. 20).

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*how understood by
Jews and
Christians.*

But excluding once again both these and other Christian testimonies, all of which, it is pretended by the modern sceptic, have been deeply tinctured with foreign superstitions, I appeal to universal

*Heathen
testimony
on this
point.*

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heathendom itself in favour of the ancient exposition of the sacred record. There is found to be a singular consent¹, in East and West, in North and South, in civilised and semi-barbarous countries, in the Old World and the New, not only to the fact that serpents were somehow associated with the ruin of the human family, but that serpents so employed were vehicles of a malignant, personal spirit, by whatever name he was described.

Most rational conclusion.

As, therefore, the Old Persian is but one of a large cluster of cognate stories, it were surely far more rational to explain them all on the hypothesis of common parentage anterior to the primitive migrations, than to argue, *first*, that Hebrews only had been left without traditions on this subject till comparatively modern times; and *secondly*, that the age in which they finally contracted their belief in Satan and his angels, and so consummated, in the view of the objector, their portentous lapse into the eastern dualism, was, strange to say, the age, when, as a body, they are known to have imbibed far stricter tenets on the unity and monarchy of God.

§ 3. *Doctrine of Holy Angels.*

Angelology attributed to heathen influence.

The spirit which impelled some modern writers to explain the scriptural notices of Satan, the great Tempter, by referring to the influence exercised upon the Jew by Persian dualism, is shewn afresh in their impatience of all statements with respect to the existence of the 'holy,' or unfallen, angels. These also we are told 'belong to a class of concep-

¹ See, for instance, Part II. p. 140; Part III. p. 145; and above, p. 195.

tions no longer possible in the world¹, and *therefore* (such is the conclusion of philosophy) they must all of them be proved to have originated in some thoroughly pagan system. The abettors of this startling argument have had recourse especially to effects supposed to have been wrought upon the Hebrews by the 'Zend religion of the Persians²;' and they point triumphantly, in confirmation of their view, to the existence of the Sadducees³, a high and philosophic order, who are thought to have preserved the purer creed of earlier generations with remarkable fidelity,—in so far at least as they dissented from the superstitions of the Pharisees, in confessing neither angel nor spirit. Efforts have again been made in this particular instance to support the theory of extensive amalgamation between Hebrews and Babylonians by adverting to the fact that various forms of error and exaggeration in the sphere of angelology *did* spring up, as it would seem, spontaneously among both Jews and Christians of succeeding times.

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The Sadducees.

The chief reliance has been placed, however, on

Inference to

¹ Dr Donaldson's *Christ. Orthod.* p. 349 (following Schleiermacher).

² Here Dr Donaldson accepts the dictum of Strauss without the least qualification: *Christ. Orthod.* p. 137.

³ The author of *Christian Orthodoxy*, p. 372, affirms that 'their disbelief in angels and devils is passed over [by New Testament writers] in guarded silence, as far as any censure is concerned.' He then adds, 'In many respects our Lord seems to have approved and recommended their views;' and again (p. 373), 'It is difficult to resist the impression that Jesus [our blessed Lord] and

His brother James, being known by the characteristic title of this sect, openly allowed many of the fundamental doctrines of the Sadducees'! Such language has not unnaturally exposed its author to the animadversions of the last Bampton Lecturer (Mr Mansell), who, after pointing out the real origin and affinities of Dr Donaldson's hypothesis, declares that 'by this method of exposition,' according to which our Saviour lent His high authority to the dissemination of religious falsehood, 'Christian Orthodoxy may mean anything or nothing' (p. 419).

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IV.*be drawn
from Rab-
binical tes-
timony.*

one definite testimony of the Jerusalem Talmud. In that passage¹, it is written: 'R. Simeon Ben-Lachish saith, The names of angels went up by the hand of Israel out of Babylon. For before it is said, "Then flew one of the seraphim unto me:" "The seraphim stood before Him," Isai. vi.; but afterward, "the Man Gabriel" [Dan. ix. 21] and "Michael your prince" [Dan. x. 21].' Now whatever else may be implied in such assertions, we are doubtless pointed by them to a circumstance, which cannot fail to have arrested the attention of all Biblical scholars, viz. that after the great exile, *personal appellations* had begun to be assigned in some few cases (Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel) to the ministering angels of the Hebrew Church.

*Character
of angelic
designa-
tions.*

But equally apparent is the fact that these angelic designations are in no way borrowed from the titles of gods and genii which abound in writings of the Medo-Persians, as indeed of every other ancient people; they have no apparent relation, etymological or otherwise, with the element-worship of the East; in thought as well as grammar they are all of them the purest Hebrew; *Michael*, for example, signifying 'who is as God?' and so protesting in its very form against approaches to polytheism².

*Real points
under dis-
cussion.*

On looking, therefore, with a critical eye upon the question now before us, we discover that the chief external evidence in favour of supposing that

¹ Lightfoot's *Heb. and Talmud. Exerc. upon St Luke* (ch. i. v. 26): *Works*, xii. 24, ed. Pitman.

² See Dr Mill's examination of this very point in his *Christ. Adv. Publ.* for 1841, pp. 55, 57. Hengstenberg, *Genuineness of Daniel*, p. 138, remarks with justice that 'both

Gabriel and Michael [the two names peculiar to Daniel] occur only in such visions, as from their dramatic character demand the most exact description possible of the persons concerned, and the bringing of them out into stronger relief.'

the angelology of the Hebrews was of heathen parentage, is totally unconnected with the point at issue; for I feel no obligation to analyse the many wild conceits, which, in the dotage of the Hebrew nation, urged men to 'intrude into the things not seen,' and build their visionary systems of 'celestial hierarchies.' The questions¹ fairly brought into the present investigation will relate, (1) to a distinction between higher and lower angels, *i. e.* the existence of orders or *gradations* in the spirit-world; and (2) to the specific number of intelligences who occupy the loftiest rank in these angelic orders.

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Now that some distinction of the sort existed long before the Babylonish exile can be satisfactorily evinced from the magnificent passage in the sixth

*Early traces
of angelic
orders.*

¹ I cannot, for example, be expected to discuss the general question, opened more than once by Dr Donaldson, as to whether angels, in the *Christian sense*, are ever mentioned in the old (or ante-Babylonian) Scriptures. Dr Donaldson seems to be persuaded (*Christ. Orthod.* p. 348) that the received doctrine of good angels is somehow incompatible with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. He may well, on such hypothesis, be anxious to get rid of what he feels to be a horrible superstition; but surely the argument which he employs is equally fatal to belief in *all* intermediate agencies whatever; for example, in the institution of a Christian ministry, who, like the angels, act in God's behalf, and by authority derived from Him. All theories apart, I cannot help expressing my amazement how any person of average ability can study

the Old Testament without discovering at every turn the flattest contradiction of Dr Donaldson's assertions. Were the two angels, for example, who had been despatched to Sodom other than personal beings, acting as the veritable messengers of the Most High God Himself? They say expressly, 'The Lord hath sent us to destroy it' (Gen. xix. 13). Dean Milman (*Hist. of Christ.* I. 70, Lond. 1840), who also traces the systematizing of Hebrew angelology to the residence in Babylon, is notwithstanding ready to admit that 'the earliest books of the Old Testament fully recognize the ministration of angels.' It is, indeed, remarkable that the *only* historical books of the Old Testament where such allusions do *not* appear, are exactly those which were written *after* the Babylonish captivity,—the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

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IV.

chapter of Isaiah. There the prophet's eye is riveted upon the glory of the six-winged seraphim, who constitute the 'angel-princes' of that early period, and as such are stationed foremost in the ministry of heaven; while one of them by issuing forth (vi. 6, 7) upon a message to Isaiah, and so offering proof of independent personality, enables us to answer the absurd objection that the primitive angels were but passive vehicles or manifestations of God Himself. The vision of Micaiah, in like manner, brings before us in still older times 'the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right hand and on His left' (1 Kings xxii. 19—22). Nay, traces of angelic orders, such as meet us in the New Testament and later writings of the Old, are pointed out as early as the age of Moses and of Joshua; for the 'prince,' or captain of the Lord's host (Josh. v. 13—15) who then comes forward to conduct the family of God into the land of promise, has been held to correspond¹ with the created angel (Exod. xxxiii. 2, 3), who replaced the glorious Angel of the Presence (Exod. xxiii. 20—23) in administering the Sinaitic dispensation, after Israel had most grievously offended in the matter of the calf. But be this as it may, the close affinity that exists between the language of

¹ This subject also is discussed at considerable length by Dr Mill, as above, pp. 92—99. The rival theory is, that the Angel in Josh. v. was none other than the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity,—identical, therefore, with the Angel of the Lord, in Exod. xxiii. 20—23, and other places: see Ode, *Commentarius de Angelis*, pp. 1032 sq. Traject.

1739; who, with many modern critics, goes farther still, identifying Michael himself with the uncreated Word of God; while others add again to these supposed identifications by representing the *Gabriel* of the prophet Daniel as a reappearance of the created, or inferior, angel of Exod. xxxii. 34.

the book of Joshua and descriptions of the prince of angels, who, as Michael, reappears for the protection of the Israelites in visions of the book of Daniel, may be fairly pleaded as a proof that the familiarity of the Hebrew Church with such conceptions is not due to her reputed intercourse with the Ormazd-religion.

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It was easy to foresee that the amshaspands of the Persian system¹ would be quoted as the nearest parallel to the archangels of the Holy Scriptures. Those beings, we have learned already², were six in number; or, including Ormazd himself, who also is invested on some rare occasions with the title of amshaspand, the whole number may be raised to seven³. We saw, moreover, that the probable origin of such specification must be sought in the primeval worship of the heavenly bodies, when the

*Amshas-
pands and
archangels.*

¹ e. g. the author of *Christian Orthodoxy* declares (p. 135) with reference to the Book of Daniel: 'In this book we find the celestial hierarchy of amshaspands fully recognised.' Other speculators of the same school have sought to bring the *fervers* of Persia into connexion with the 'guardian angels' both of Jews and Christians (see St Matth. xviii. 10; Acts xii. 72; and Dean Alford on the former passage); but the Persian *ferver*, where we are not forced to understand it of the *spirit* of the individual man, was rather the ideal prototype or archetype of some actual being: see above, p. 172, n. 3. With regard to the conception of angels, specially allotted to watch over the affairs of particular nations, Hengstenberg (*Daniel*, p. 140) affirms that no trace of it occurs in the Avesta, except that Bahman, the

first of the amshaspands, 'whostands in about the same relation to Ormazd as Gabriel here does to the angel of the Lord,' is called the 'protector of all animals' who are there said to constitute his people (Rhode, p. 323), while Ormazd himself is the patron of men. The version of the LXX in Deut. xxxii. 8, will perhaps bear witness to some old tradition of the Jews with respect to the allotting of particular nations to particular angels: *ὅτε διεμέριξεν ὁ ὑψίστος ἔθνη, ὡς διέσπευεν υἱοὺς Ἀδάμ, ἐστῆσαν θρία ἔθνη κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων Θεοῦ*, where the Hebrew is *לְמַסְפָּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל*: cf. Prof. Selwyn's *Nota Critica*, 'Deuteron.' p. 65, Cantab. 1858.

² Above, p. 169.

³ Rhode, p. 365; Mill, as before, p. 59.

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IV.*Number of
archangels.*

shining multitude above were substituted by man's vain imagination for the Lord of hosts Himself: and as the influence of that ancient superstition was far from being peculiar to the Persians, the allusion to 'seven' principal objects of esteem and worship is continually recurring in all parts of heathendom¹. It is, however, a mistake to argue that the later Hebrew people, and much less the Hebrew prophets of the exile, manifested any disposition to deify the orbs of light. There is indeed one solitary passage in the book of Tobit, where the speaker, Raphael, describes himself as of the number of the 'seven holy angels who enter in before the glory of the Holy One' (xii. 15; cf. Rev. viii. 2); but, according to a different method of enumeration, the archangels of the Hebrew are more frequently reduced to *four* (Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel), each presiding over one of the four armies of ministry who sing praises to the Holy and the Blessed². Still if we had higher reasons for accepting the account of Tobit as an illustration of the general state of knowledge on this subject at the period when he wrote, it would be running counter to the sacred usage, both of the Old and New Testament, to argue that the number

¹ Above, pp. 52, 169, to which examples may be added the seven *rishts* of Hindustan, who, at least in the Puranic period, were represented as 'seven primeval personages, born of Brahmá's mind, and presiding, under different forms, over each Manwantara.'

² See the passage from the *Pirke* of Rabbi Eliezer (who, according to Fürst, *Bibliotheca Judaica*, i. 232,

flourished about A.D. 70), in Dr Mill's work, as before, p. 58, n. 10. Dr Donaldson (p. 136) breaks through this difficulty at once by urging that when the Jews limited the number of 'attendant spirits' to *four*, they did so 'probably from some confusion between the *amshaspands* and the *seraphim* of Isaiah on the one hand, and the four creatures of *Ezekiel* on the other'!

seven as there employed, contains the slightest reference to the worship of celestial luminaries, or to any phase whatever of gentile superstition¹. 'Seven,' alike before and after the Captivity, had its own specific import for all members of the Hebrew Church. It was the signature of fulness, union, manifoldness, perfection; and therefore the 'seven spirits of God' in the Apocalypse (i. 4; iv. 5) are understood as pointing us directly to the diverse operations of the One all-gracious Spirit²; while the 'seven stars' are the 'angels of the seven churches,' and the 'seven candlesticks' a grand collective symbol of the whole Christian body (i. 20).

CHAP.
IV.

*Scriptural
use of
'seven.'*

§ 4. *Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body.*

To foster a belief in the awakening of man's body from the sleep of death, and in the final glorification of his whole humanity, was a primary object in the teaching of St Paul and of apostles generally. In their view 'the redemption of the body' at the re-appearing of our Lord and Saviour, was the crowning-point in a succession of stupendous acts which dated from His own ineffable assumption of our weak and dying flesh. Yet writers are not wanting who assure us that the doctrine of the resurrection, so specifically and profoundly Christian, is a relic only of primeval barbarism which passed into the Hebrew creed, like others of the same description, at the period of the Babylonish exile³. Observing, it would seem, that

*Importance
attached to
this doc-
trine in the
New Testa-
ment.*

¹ Cf. Bähr, *Symbolik*, i. 189 sq.

² Hengstenberg, *Die Offenbarung des h. Johan.* i. 91, 92, Berlin, 1849.

C. A. E. IV.

³ e. g. Wegscheider does not blush to affirm that this opinion unquestionably grew up 'e notionibus man-

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IV.

fuller light is thrown upon the mystery of our future being, in proportion as the 'mystery of godliness' itself was gradually unfolded, those irreverent critics have not scrupled to conjecture that instead of such ulterior light proceeding from the supernatural source, it must have had an earthly origin among the ancient votaries of Ormazd.

*No trace
of it in the
Avesta.*

And here, as in some other cases, the supposed 'discovery' of the doctrine in the Zendic books had been facilitated by the mistranslations of their first editor. It is since established by more competent scholars¹, that in passages where Anquetil Duperron rendered 'till the resurrection,' the words really signify 'for ever,'—an important rectification, which, as soon as it is generally made known, will silence not a few of the objections borrowed from this quarter. Like results have also followed from the critical examination of some other Zendic texts; until at present all who are entitled to pronounce a judgment on the question may be heard affirming that no glimpses of a resurrection of the body can be traced in extant books of the Avesta.

*Statements
of Theo-
pompos.*

Still that Persians did not long continue strangers to the thought of some ulterior re-embodying of the souls departed, may be argued with great shew of reason from the testimony of the historian,

cis et imperfectis hominum incultiorum,' and that it finally passed over to the Jews from the school of Zoroaster (quoted in Mr Mansell's *Bampton Lectures*, 1858, pp. 417, 418).

¹ Burnouf, *Études*, in *Journ. Asiat.* (1840), pp. 7 sq. was the first scholar who pointed out this mistake. His conclusions have been since corro-

borated by Spiegel, *Zeits. Deutsch. morg. Gesell.* (1847), I. 260, 261; *Avesta*, I. 15, 248, n. 2. According to the *Vendid. Farg. XIX.* 89 sq., as there translated, the good or 'pure' spirits are removed on the *third day after death* to a place of perfect happiness, and the bad spirits to a place of torment: cf. Wilson's *Parsi Religion*, pp. 337, 338.

Theopompus¹, who died about the year 300 B.C. He has declared that in accordance with the Persian creed, as soon as the great struggles of Ormazd and Ahriman are all exhausted, Hades will become a void; and that mankind attaining to true happiness will then 'require no nourishment and will cast no shadows.' And elsewhere his language is still more explicit; for he says that if we may believe the Magi, men will come to life again and be immortal:—both which statements fairly indicate that at the close of the 'great year' of Persia, every thing, it is believed, will have reverted to the primitive condition and that the human body, no exception to this general law, will have itself experienced the refining and exalting process.

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There are reasons, it is true, for urging² that two different lines of thought existed in the schools of ancient Persia: one, proceeding from a rigorous form of dualism³, akin to that of Mani, and so, as in the convents of northern India, making of the human body a mere prison-house in which the soul was doing penance for her past misdeeds; the other mourning over the dissolution of the body as a victory won by Ahriman, and so including

Two theories of the body.

¹ The testimony of this writer has been examined at some length by J. G. Müller, *Theol. Studien und Kritiken* (1835), pp. 482 sq. in an article entitled 'Ist die Lehre von der Auferstehung des Leibes wirklich nicht eine alt-persische Lehre?' The discussion turns in a great measure on the force of *αναβιούν* in the following passage: *Θεόπομπος, ἐν τῇ βιβλίῳ τῶν Φιλιππικῶν, καὶ ἀναβιώσεσθαι, κατὰ τοὺς Μάγους, φησὶ τοὺς*

ἀνθρώπους καὶ ἔσεσθαι ἀθανάτους (in Diogen. Laert. 'Proœm.' § 9). The other passage of importance is preserved in Plutarch, *De Iside*, c. XLVII. the chief words being: *τέλος δ' ἀπολείπεσθαι τὸν βῆδον, καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἀνθρώπους εὐδαιμόνας ἔσεσθαι, μήτε τροφῆς δεομένους, μήτε σκιὰν ποιούνας.*

² See Döllinger, *Heidenthum*, p. 381.

³ Above, p. 174.

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the idea of re-embodiment among the blessings that would ultimately flow from the subversion of his empire. But the testimony of Theopompus may be viewed as an expression of the 'orthodox' belief, especially when we bear in mind that subsequent language of the *Bundehesh*¹ is strikingly in favour of the resurrection-theory.

The Hebrew doctrine ante-Babylonian.

On the other hand, assuming, as in previous instances, that Hebrew prophets would have seen no difficulty in borrowing novel tenets from the creed of their enslavers, it appears to me indisputable that the doctrine of the resurrection of the body was believed to some extent among the members of the sacred family long before the period of the Babylonish exile. I shall lay no stress at present on debatable texts²; of which, however, it is no exaggeration to affirm that while incapable of *proving* that the doctrine of a resurrection was fully or definitely held, they nevertheless bear witness to the fact that the idea of resurrection had never been repugnant to the feelings of the ancient Israelite, but rather coincided with the expectations that arose in him from a belief in God's redemptive and restoring mercy. It will here suffice to mention that the words which Daniel is said to have in-dited under the inspirations of the Medo-Persian system are in perfect unison with declarations of Isaiah two centuries before. For instance, if the prophet of the Captivity was pointing onward to a crisis when 'many of them that sleep in the dust

¹ The passages are collected in Rhode, as before, pp. 465 sq.; but, as Spiegel remarks, a correct and critical edition of the *Bundehesh*

will doubtless modify the old assertions on this point also.

² Cf. Fairbairn's *Ezekiel*, pp. 356—359.

of the earth shall awake' (Dan. xii. 2); the jubilant prophet of the reign of Ahaz had already comforted his audience by the promise that the Lord 'will swallow up death in victory' (Is. xxv. 8); nay, the words which, in a second passage, are employed by him have found their literal echo in the words of Daniel just recited; for Isaiah also has proclaimed in no ambiguous language 'Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise; awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust' (xxvi. 19).

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§ 5. *Doctrine of a Benefactor and Mediator.*

(1) Connected with the re-awakening of the dead, at least in some of the more recent, or post-Christian, writings of the Persians, there is frequent mention of a glorious hero-prophet, by whose ministry, as one chief organ of Ormazd, the empire of the *deus* shall be subverted, earth herself shall be restored to something of her pristine glory and the wrongs of man redressed. The name of this expected champion of the Perso-Aryan race is Sosiosh (*Saōshyāns*¹, 'the Benefactor'). He is first of all presented to our notice in a passage of the *Vendidad*², which, if the new translation of it be accepted, is found to run as follows: 'Zarathustra gave warning to Agra-mainyus (and said):

Early men-
tion of
Sosiosh.

¹ Spiegel, *Avesta*, I. 244, n. 1, informs us that the root of the word is *su* ('to profit'), to which it is related as the future participle: hence 'der nützen werdende' 'der Helfer.' It was not, however, a proper name nor limited to an individual worthy, but rather marked a

series or *class* of benefactors, and as such it occurs also in the plural number.

² Farg. xxi. 16—19: cf. *Zeits. Deutsch. morg. Gesell.* (1847), I. 261, 262, where the old translation was first corrected.

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"Base Agra-mainyus! I will smite the creation, which is fashioned by the *devs*: I will smite the *Nasus*, whom the *devs* have fashioned. I will smite the *Pari* whom men worship (?), until Sosiosh the Victorious, is born out of the water *Kaṁsaōya*, from the eastern clime, from the eastern climes."

*Expansion
of the idea.*

The meagre hint of Sosiosh, thus communicated in the early part of the Avesta, was expanded and embellished in the works of the Sassanian epoch and especially in the *Bundehesh*¹. That benefactor was from first to last a *man*; and like two other beings, his precursors, now associated with him in the work of liberation and each reigning in succession for a thousand years, he was distinctly held to be the offspring of the holy Zoroaster; yet the name of Sosiosh alone, as greatest or as last in order of the hero-prophets, was the rallying-point where Persians were accustomed to find refuge from the miseries of their present lot. The time assigned for his appearance (say the authors of the story) is the time when evil and impiety of every kind have grown to an appalling magnitude. Approaching with a noiseless step, he will evince the

¹ See the passages in Rhode, pp. 465 sq. Spiegel (*Avesta*, I. 32 sq.) has also drawn attention more especially to the full-blown eschatology of the Persians and compared it with that of the later Jews, which, in his opinion, it strongly resembles (p. 35). The main points, according to his representation, are as follows: 'Die Erwartung eines sowol weltlichen als geistlichen Herrschers, der sowol sein Volk zum herrschenden macht, zum Regenten über alle seine Bedrucker, der aber auch die Reli-

gion wieder reinigt. Dass das Reich tausend Jahre dauern soll, ist überall bestimmt ausgesprochen:—points indeed which may remind us not only of the Messianic tenets prevalent among the later Jews, but also of the modified Judaism which in the form of Chiliasm (or sensuous Millenarianism) was current more or less in various branches of the early Christian Church, and only repressed with great difficulty: see Neander, *Ch. Hist.* II. 395—401.

greatness of his mission by destroying death itself and by re-calling all the dead to life. The first to rise again will be the prototype of men (or Kaiomorts), and after him the earliest pair of human beings (Meshia and Meshiane); then, in seven and fifty years, the long array of their descendants. All of these have been appointed to receive the gift of immortality by drinking of the sacred *homa*. Next will follow a grand separation of the pure and impure, of the righteous and unrighteous; friend will lose the sweet companionship of friend, the husband will be severed from his spouse, the sister from the brother. They who stand the sifting of that day are borne aloft to the peculiar dwelling of Ormazd: the rest are driven back to the abodes of misery and torment which had also been their portion from the third day after death. The change, however, thus effected is not destined to be ultimate. A blazing comet (Gurzsher), hitherto held in fetters by the moon, will break away from his confinement, and, rushing wildly on the earth, will be converted into the agent of Ormazd for purging out the dross that now adheres to all created nature; Ahriman himself will vanish in the flames, and hell, the dark abyss of Duzakh, with its godless tenants, being purified and renovated by the final conflagration, the whole family of man will be assembled on the new-born earth to sing the glory of Ormazd and the amshaspands.

(2) But the later history of religious thought in Persia introduces us to one more being who has not unfrequently been placed in close comparison with the Founder of Christianity. His name is *Mithra*; and so paramount are claims which he

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IV.

*Persian
eschatology.*

*Early place
and character of
Mithra.*

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advances, in the estimation of some modern writers, that the Gospel is itself pronounced by them a branch of Mithraism¹. No small confusion, it is true, exists among the older notices of Mithra even in the Persian sacred books²; yet there, as elsewhere, the prevailing image represents to us a wakeful and beneficent divinity³, 'lord of life and head of all created beings,' active, luminous, fertilising, purifying, and invincible. His place and functions in relation to the highest god appear to have resembled those of the Greek Apollo; and at periods when Ormazd sinks back into comparative quietude, the old connexion with the creature-world and the administration of the light-kingdom, are dependent on the energy of Mithra, who is thus the living and abiding link between the visible and the invisible. Associating intimately and well-nigh

¹ This, for instance, was one of many self-contradictory views propounded by Dupuis in his *Origine de tous les Cultes* (see Part I. p. 35, n. 3): and even Creuzer, while rejecting the theory with something like contempt (*Symb.* I. 238, n. 2; cf. p. 341), is induced to look favourably upon another oft-repeated story which ascribes the origin of some ecclesiastical usages (e. g. the institution of the Christmas festival) to the influence of Mithraism (*Ibid.* p. 261). Christ, according to this notion, was, in a spiritual sense, the *Sol Novus*, and His birth was therefore celebrated at the period of the year, which Mithraism assigned to the new birth of the celestial luminary. See, on the general question of Mithra-worship, Von-Hammer, *Mémoire sur le culte de Mithra*,

Paris, 1833.

² The same remark applies equally to the Greek writers: for Herodotus, (I. 131), in speaking of the imitative genius of the Persians, is thought to be guilty of confusing the Venus of Assyrian mythology, *Myliu*, with the Persian *Mithra* (cf. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 13, § 12). The real representative of Venus in the later Persian system was Anahita (Anaitis); Mithra and Anahita corresponding in the main to Baal and Astarte: see Rawlinson's *Herod.* I. 271, 272; Döllinger, *Heiden.* pp. 384, 385; Burnouf, *Sur le Yasna*, pp. 351 sq.

³ For instance, in the *Yasna* (Burnouf, p. 222), 'J'invoque, je célèbre Mithra qui multiplie les couples de bœufs qui a mille oreilles, dix milles yeux,' &c.

upon a level with Ormazd¹ himself, this secondary principle of good is also from his very nature the antagonist of the Evil One. He marshals the bright army of beneficent genii² in their conflict with the *devs*; in him the soul departed finds her best conductor to the bridge of Chinevad; while bodies of the dead, though captured by the prince of darkness, are the objects of his sympathy and care.

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It may have been the service rendered to the votary of the Ormazd-religion in the daily war with Ahriman, that made the later Greek of Plutarch's³ age, assign to Mithra the peculiar title 'Mediator' (μεσίτης); for although a somewhat similar class of functions was awarded to other beings, as Sraōsha and Ráshne-rást⁴, who both were thought to superintend the great judicial process after death, in order that the soul of man might then receive her fitting recompence, 'not a hair too little nor too much,' it was to Mithra, most of all, that subjects of the light-kingdom were instructed to address their homage. Some were even ready to contend that if the first man had sung the praise of Mithra, or had ever named that name, his soul would forthwith have ascended to the mansions of ultimate felicity.

*Mithra as
a mediator.*

In proportion as Ormazd himself receded from the active visible sphere of being, or, in different language, was abstracted more and more from

*Virtual
substitution
of Mithra
for Or-
mazd.*

¹ See the passage from the *Yasna*, quoted above, p. 170, n. 2.

² Hence his rank as chief of the *Izeds*; above, p. 170, n. 2.

³ *De Isid.* c. XLVI. Plutarch himself seems to regard Mithra as partaking of the natures both of Ormazd and Ahriman (μέσας δ' ἀμφοῖν):

cf. Dr Donaldson's *Christ. Orthod.* p. 131, and Creuzer, I. 292, the latter of whom supposes that Mithra was a kind of chemical mean or 'Liebesfeuer,' harmonising two antagonistic Principles.

⁴ Spiegel, *Avesta*, I. 31; Burnouf, *Sur le Yasna*, p. 200.

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his connexion with the Sun, that luminary was appropriated as the home or symbol of his younger representative. Originally placed, as it would seem, midway between the sun and moon, and so perhaps identified on some occasions with the planet Venus¹, Mithra was ere long a potent and invincible sun-god², author of the light, dispeller of the darkness; and in subsequent stages of the mythe, he rose completely to the rank of a supreme divinity, corresponding in the vastness and the splendour of his attributes to the Osiris of the later Pharaohs. Mithra was *the* sun-god of the Medo-Persian system.

Post-Christian representations of Mithra.

Drawing his existence no longer from Ormazd, of whom in the Avesta he was ever made a creature and a tributary, he is pictured to us in post-Christian writings as the preternatural offspring of a rock, or of the soil³. According also to the numerous sculptures of him still surviving he has been invested with distinctly human properties. He is a young man, clothed with a tunic and a Persian cloke, and having on his head a Persian bonnet or tiara. He kneels upon a prostrate bull;

¹ See above, p. 216, n. 2.

² Strabo is the first Greek writer who says this expressly: Πέρσαι... τιμῶσι δὲ καὶ ἥλιον, ὃν καλοῦσι Μίθραν (xv. 13). It is further worth noting that the name does not occur on the Achæmenian inscriptions until the reign of Artaxerxes Mnemon (Rawlinson's *Herod.* Vol. i. p. 272, note): yet there can be no doubt as to its ancient usage in connexion with the *Sun*, in both the branches of the Aryan family. To pass by Medo-Persian names *Mithradates* (or *Μιτραδάτης*, Her. i. 110), as importing 'given by the Sun' (cf. *Hormis-*

dates 'given by Ormazd'), we have continual examples in the Rig-Vêda, where *Mitra* is used as the equivalent of *A'ditya*, 'the sun,' or one at least of twelve personifications of the Sun corresponding to the signs of the Zodiac.

³ St Jerome, who followed a history of Mithra by Eubulus (now lost) informs us (*Adv. Jovinian.* Opp. iv. col. 149, ed. Bened.): 'Narrant et Gentilium fabulæ Mithram et Erichthonium, vel in lapide, vel in terra, de solo æstu libidinis esse generatos.'

and while holding it with the left hand by the nostrils, with the right he plunges into its shoulder a short sword or dagger. The bull is at the same time vigorously attacked by a dog, a serpent and a scorpion. The ideas embodied in the suffering animal are at once elucidated when we call to mind¹, that in the old mythology of Persia all organic life, the human and the bestial, issued from the shoulder of the primitive bull; and therefore astronomic and other symbols here employed are probably to be expounded of the action of the sun-god on created nature, his far-piercing beams awakening all its latent energies, opening the fresh veins of life and drawing thence a large supply of fructifying virtue. The key, however, to Mithraic mysteries, all of which are said to have been celebrated in a species of 'cave,' was not intrusted to the vulgar and unlettered, but reserved, as in the other kindred rites and orgies, for the few who underwent a solemn initiation. Here indeed the worship of the Persian sun-god lost all traces of its old resemblance to the creed of the Avesta. It fell off into the whirl of mystic and ascetic faiths, wherein the laxer party such as Commodus and monsters like him, reconciled the adoration of Serapis and of Mithra with the foulest violations of the law of conscience; while the genuine devotee was eagerly accepting the severe prescriptions of the mystagogue, who told him that by passing through a lengthened ordeal of torture and privation, he was able to escape from the necessity of repeated births and consummate his union with the glorious Mithra, 'his god and his crown.'

CHAP.
IV.

*Meaning
of those
symbols.*

*Mithraic
mysteries.*

¹ Above, pp. 193, 194.

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IV.

*Opposition
between
Mithraism
and Chris-
tianity.*

There is no doubt that while the visions of the *Bundeshesh* derived their colouring, and in part their substance also, from Semitic or from quasi-Christian influences, the advocates of Mithra-worship in the earlier centuries of our era were engaged with more or less of system in retarding the triumphant march of Christianity¹. At a period when the claims of our religion were put forward with an irresistible charm alike in the unspotted lives and the heroic deaths of its true-hearted converts, many of the heathen, still unwilling to embrace it, so far yielded to vibrations it excited in all quarters, as to recognise in it the hidden working of a supernatural virtue. We discern this tendency amid the swarm of startling heresies that sprang up in its track; for most of them were anxious to embody one or more dis severed doctrines of the Gospel with their wild and heathenish speculations; and others have been also charged with mimicking the smaller details of its ritual system². We discern this tendency still more in

¹ This is one of Von Hammer's conclusions, in which Creuzer (i. 339) apparently acquiesces, extending the remark to other heathen 'orgies' and 'mysteries' of the post-Christian period. Yet, as various writers have complained, there was occasionally a disposition in apologists of the early Church to lay undue stress on some points of resemblance between Mithraism and Christianity.

² e.g. Tertullian (*De Præscript. Hæc.* c. xi) alludes to such apparent mimicries in speaking of Mithraism itself: 'Sed queritur, a quo intellectus intervertatur eorum, qui ad hæreses faciunt? A diabolo scilicet,

cujus sunt partes intervertendi veritatem: qui ipsas quoque res sacramentorum divinorum in idolorum mysteriis æmulatur. Tingit et ipse quosdam, utique credentes et fideles suos [referring to the ceremony of initiation when water was poured by the mystagogue on the aspirant's head]: expositionem delictorum de lavacro repromittit: et si adhuc initiat Mithra, signat illic in frontibus milites suos; celebrat et panis oblationem' (referring perhaps, to a kind of Parsee communion, where bread was blessed by the priest and eaten, in conjunction with draughts of the homa-plant: cf. Döllinger, p. 373).

one particular instance, bearing on the present theme, for 'almost every thing that Zoroaster taught of Mithra' was perpetuated in the school of Mani, with the noticeable difference that the Persian misbeliever did not scruple to transfer it all directly to his Christ¹. And, strange though such an issue may appear, not Mani's system only but the heathen form of Mithraism as well, was able, in the breaking up of old religions, to attract unto itself a multitude of followers both in East and West. It flourished in alliance with some kindred systems in the mother-city of the Roman empire: it was planted, by the ardour of the foreign legionaries, in the Roman capital of Britain².

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Wide diffusion of Mithraism.

Vain, however, and unfruitful was the zeal put forward in transplanting these fantastic shadows of exhausted paganism. The western world, excited by the general 'shaking of the nations,' was now yielding to the voice of the celestial Charmer: it was gazing on the silent march of that obscure yet glorious, of that suffering yet majestic system, to whose birthplace the inquiring Magi came of old, the first-fruits of the Gentile harvest. 'When they saw the young child, with Mary his mother, they fell down and worshipped Him.' And Christians of all future times have counted it their highest glory to prolong that wondrous act of love and

Christ the True Light of the Gentiles.

¹ Neander, *Ch. Hist.* II. 177.

² See Wellbeloved's *Eboracum*, pp. 80—86, York, 1842; and, for some very curious matter with regard to this and kindred subjects, *An Essay on the Neo-Druidic Heresy in Britannia* (ascribed to the late Mr Algnon Herbert), pp. 29 sq. Lond.

1838. The 'Druidizing Mithriacs' referred to in this essay are supposed to be an offshoot from 'a sort of magical association' that 'had grown up in the eastern parts of the Roman dominions, founded upon the doctrines and mysteries of the Persian Magi.'

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adoration. They are conscious that in Christ are fully satisfied the cravings of a spiritual hunger which religions of the world may stimulate but have no power to appease. While Bráhmans, in despair of all the helpers whom their own imagination had created, were still dreaming of some future and more permanent *avatára*; while the Buddhist, equally in north and south, abandoned the original Buddha and sought comfort now in picturing to himself the distant paradise of Amitábha 'the unmeasured Light,' and now in praying for the gracious intervention of some Buddha of the future; while the primitive vision of the helper Sosiosh, dim and fluctuating at the best, was blotted from the Persian mind entirely, or was fading under the augmented brilliance of the younger Mithra;—Christ and Christ alone, expected in the old œconomy and made manifest in the new, the living, reigning and historic Christ, the brightness of the Father's glory and the 'first-born' of a human brotherhood, was everywhere imprinting on the world an image of His love, which neither time nor space could deaden. He 'lighteth every man' by shining down into the heart. He is the true Sun, of which all heathen mediators are but transient and confused *parhelia*; for while Mithra, once his mighty rival and as such rejoicing in the name of 'the Invincible,' has left no traces, save in monumental sculptures, of the homage rendered to him in the early centuries of our era, Christ, the sovereign Lord of all, is going forward on His peaceful conquest of the nations, 'the same yesterday and to-day and for ever.'

APPENDIX I.

Alleged Connexion between Coptic and Hebrew.

(See above, p. 21, n. 3.)

THROUGH the kindness of my friend, Professor Jarrett, I am now in a position to supply the following brief comparison of ordinary words in Coptic and Hebrew. It seems to shew that so far as *vocabulary* is concerned, the relationship between the two languages can hardly be established.

Comparison of common words in Coptic and Hebrew.

Numerals.		Nouns.	
1	ⲟⲩⲁ	Father	ⲁⲃ
*2	ⲕⲏⲁⲩ	*Mother	ⲁⲙ
3	ⲙⲟⲙⲩ	Brother	ⲁⲥ
4	ⲙⲩⲟ	Sister	ⲁⲥⲟⲩ
5	ⲩⲟⲩⲩ	Son	ⲃⲏ
6	ⲕⲟⲩⲩ	Daughter	ⲃⲏⲩ
7	ⲙⲁⲙⲩ	Man	ⲁⲙⲥ
*8	ⲙⲟⲙⲟⲩ	Woman	ⲁⲙⲥⲟⲩ
9	ⲩⲟⲩⲩ	Head	{ⲁⲛⲉ, ⲁⲩⲉ, ⲁⲩⲁ}
10	ⲙⲁⲩ		
20	ⲁⲩⲩ	Eye	ⲁⲩⲩ
30	ⲙⲁⲩ	Mouth	ⲛⲟ
40	ⲙⲁⲩ	Tooth	ⲛⲁⲩⲩ
50	ⲩⲟⲩⲩ	Nose	ⲙⲁ
60	ⲕⲉ	Beard	ⲙⲟⲩⲩ
*70	ⲙⲁⲩ	Neck	ⲕⲉⲛⲉ
*80	ⲙⲁⲩⲛⲉ	and	and
90	ⲛⲟⲩⲩⲟⲩ	Shoulder	ⲙⲟⲩⲩⲟⲩ
100	ⲙⲁ	Arm	ⲙⲁⲩⲩ
1000	ⲙⲟ	Hand	ⲩⲟⲩⲩ, ⲁⲩⲁ

*Finger	ΤΗΒ, ΘΗΒ	אצבע	*Sheep	εκοοϣ	צאן, שה
Belly	ΘΗ, ΠΕΧΙ	בטן	Horse	εγτο, εθο	סוס
Heart	εΗΤ	לב	Ass	εω	חמור, אתון
Knee	ΠΔΤ	ברך	Verbs.		
Foot	φΔΤ	רגל	See	ΠΔϣ	ראה
Ear	εεεεε	און	Hear	εωτεεε	שמע
Flesh	Δϣ	בשר	Eat	οτεεε, οτωεε	אכל
Skin	Δποεε	עור	Drink	εε	שתה
Day	εεοοϣ	יום	Go	{I, εεοϣ, } {ΠΔ, εε}	הלך, יצא
Night	οτεεε	לילה	Run	ΠΗΤ	רוץ
Light	οτωοι	אור	Take	Δεεοι, οωοι	לקח
Darkness	ΚΔΚΕ	חשך	Give	{εεΔ, εεΗΙ, } {εεοι, ΤΗΙ}	נתן
†Water	εεωοϣ	מים	Do	ερ	עשה
†Sea	ιοεε	ים	Say	εε, εω	אמר
Fire	κλωεε, κρωεε	אש	Love	εεεε	אהב
Wind	πιβε	רוח	Hate	εεεεε	שנא
†River	ιορο	נהר, יאר	Touch	{εεεε, } {εε, εωε}	משש, נגע
Tree	εεεεε	עץ			
Leaf	εωε	עלה			
Ox	}	בקר, פר			
Cow					

(1) Of the above words those marked † are identical: 'א', being used of the Nile.

(2) The words marked * have considerable resemblance, which may point to a common origin.

(3) The remainder, a vast majority, appear to have no connexion whatever.

The following is a short list of accidental resemblances which have also occurred to Professor Jarrett (the Coptic words meaning the same as the words set against them):

εεεε = sap-iens.

ιωτ = ' Turkish; atta,
Gothic, 'father.'

εεεε = sag-en.

οτοπ = van, 'is,' 'are,' Magyar.

οτοπ = werf-en.

κολπ = κλεπ-τειν.

εοε = όφis.

ϣONTI = sentis.

ⲙOϣI = مشي, 'walked,'
Arab.

ϣEⲙϣI = שׁוּשׁ.

ϕWT = fut-ni, 'to flee,' Mag-
yar.

OTXΔI = ὄγης.

ϣϞWT = שׁבט

CHCI = سيف, 'sword,' Arab.

ΔWA = coq-uere.

I = i-eval = i-re.

ϣⲙⲙⲣ = חמר, 'leaven.'

IHC = חש, 'hasty.'

The use of pronominal affixes is not confined to Hebrew and Coptic, but is found also in Welsh and Magyar; of which the former is an A'ryan language, and the latter Turanian. Of the sixteen affixes used in Hebrew, the Coptic coincides exactly in only *two*, the Welsh in *one*; while in the use of *n* for נ, the Welsh agrees with the Coptic, and the Magyar differs only by the addition of *k*, which is in that language the regular affix to mark the plural in all cases. The Magyar agrees also with the Hebrew in the insertion of *i* = *i*, when the pronominal affix is added to a plural noun. The Welsh uses *i*, and the Magyar *d* as the characteristic of the second person.

On this latter question of pronominal affixes, as pointing to some close analogy between the Coptic and the Hebrew, M. Renan, *Histoire des Langues Sémitiques*, i. 83, sq. (Paris, 1858), has made the following observations :

'Il est, je le sais, des analogies plus profondes et beaucoup plus considérables aux yeux des linguistes, qui semblent rattacher la langue copte aux idiomes sémitiques. L'identité des pronoms, et surtout de la manière de les traiter dans les deux langues, est assurément un fait étrange. Cette identité s'observe jusque dans les détails qui semblent les plus accessoires : plusieurs irrégularités apparentes du pronom sémitique (le changement du ל en ך à l'affixe, par exemple) trouvent même dans la théorie du pronom copte une satisfaisante explication.

PRONOMS ISOLÉS.

Copte.	Hébreu.
1 ^{re} p. sing. ⲁNOK.....	אֲנִי
2 ^{re} p. sing. ⲡTOK et en baschmourique ⲡTAK...	אַתָּה pour אַתָּה
1 ^{re} p. pl. ⲁNON et en baschmourique ⲁNAN.....	אֲנַחְנוּ
2 ^e p. pl. ⲡTWT̄	אַתֶּם pour אַתֶּם

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advances, in the estimation of some modern writers, that the Gospel is itself pronounced by them a branch of Mithraism¹. No small confusion, it is true, exists among the older notices of Mithra even in the Persian sacred books²; yet there, as elsewhere, the prevailing image represents to us a wakeful and beneficent divinity³, 'lord of life and head of all created beings,' active, luminous, fertilising, purifying, and invincible. His place and functions in relation to the highest god appear to have resembled those of the Greek Apollo; and at periods when Ormazd sinks back into comparative quietude, the old connexion with the creature-world and the administration of the light-kingdom, are dependent on the energy of Mithra, who is thus the living and abiding link between the visible and the invisible. Associating intimately and well-nigh

¹ This, for instance, was one of many self-contradictory views propounded by Dupuis in his *Origine de tous les Cultes* (see Part I. p. 35, n. 3): and even Creuzer, while rejecting the theory with something like contempt (*Symb.* I. 238, n. 2; cf. p. 341), is induced to look favourably upon another oft-repeated story which ascribes the origin of some ecclesiastical usages (e. g. the institution of the Christmas festival) to the influence of Mithraism (*Ibid.* p. 261). Christ, according to this notion, was, in a spiritual sense, the *Sol Novus*, and His birth was therefore celebrated at the period of the year, which Mithraism assigned to the new birth of the celestial luminary. See, on the general question of Mithra-worship, Von-Hammer, *Mémoire sur le culte de Mithra*,

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² The same remark applies equally to the Greek writers: for Herodotus, (I. 131), in speaking of the imitative genius of the Persians, is thought to be guilty of confusing the Venus of Assyrian mythology, *Myllitta*, with the Persian *Mithra* (cf. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 13, § 12). The real representative of Venus in the later Persian system was Anahita (Anaitis); Mithra and Anahita corresponding in the main to Baal and Astarte: see Rawlinson's *Herod.* I. 271, 272; Döllinger, *Heiden.* pp. 384, 385; Burnouf, *Sur le Yasna*, pp. 351 sq.

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It may have been the service rendered to the votary of the Ormazd-religion in the daily war with Ahriman, that made the later Greek of Plutarch's³ age, assign to Mithra the peculiar title 'Mediator' (*μεσίτης*); for although a somewhat similar class of functions was awarded to other beings, as Sraōsha and Ráshne-rást⁴, who both were thought to superintend the great judicial process after death, in order that the soul of man might then receive her fitting recompence, 'not a hair too little nor too much,' it was to Mithra, most of all, that subjects of the light-kingdom were instructed to address their homage. Some were even ready to contend that if the first man had sung the praise of Mithra, or had ever named that name, his soul would forthwith have ascended to the mansions of ultimate felicity.

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derive while there a sort of gratification from the offerings which were made in her behalf. Thus, to take one striking specimen from Dr Livingstone's work (p. 434; cf. pp. 319, 641, 642): 'The same superstitious ideas being prevalent through the whole of the country north of the Zambesi, seems to indicate that the people must originally have been one. All believe that the souls of the departed still mingle among the living, and partake in some way of the food they consume. In sickness, sacrifices of fowls and goats are made to appease the spirits. It is imagined that they wish to take the living away from earth and all its enjoyments. When one man has killed another, a sacrifice is made, as if to lay the spirit of the victim. A sect is reported to exist who kill men in order to take their hearts and offer them to the *Barimo*.' Mr Shooter also, speaking of the Kafirs of Natal, has made a similar observation (p. 161); and when he adds that the attention of departed spirits is thought to be restricted to their own relatives,—a father caring for the family and a chief for the tribe, which they respectively left behind them,—we need only turn to China or New Zealand to discover a most vivid and exact resemblance (Part III. p. 34, p. 196).

Slaughter of servants in honour of their chiefs. The horrible practice of burning widows which had long prevailed in Hindustan, and which was also found by early missionaries in the Wendic tribes of northern Europe (see the letter of Boniface, *Opp.* ed. Giles, I. 132 sq.) had extended southward to the Fiji islands (Part III. p. 181, n. 1), where slaves and even children of the deceased were put to death at his funeral (cf. Herod. IV. 71, 72). Dr Livingstone, while speaking of the negroes of South-Central Africa (p. 318), produces the same gloomy picture: 'When a chief dies, a number of servants are slaughtered with him to form his company in the other world.' He then adds: 'As we go north, the people become more bloodily superstitious.'

Transmigration. We have seen that both in civilised and barbarous countries the idea of immortality was always prone to clothe itself in more or less elaborate theories on the transmigration of the human soul. Such theories, we have further seen, prevailed in all the polished circles of Hindustan and Egypt, but the traces of them were observable as well among the wild tribes of America (e. g. Part III. p. 133). It is probable that in almost every case the spirit was supposed to linger for a time in the vicinity of her old dwelling, and then to start upon her wander-

ings through the different animal forms which she was destined to inhabit. And substantially the same account is brought us by the missionary who has studied the religion of the southern tribes of Africa: 'They believe in the transmigration of souls; and also that while persons are still living they may enter into lions and alligators, and then return again to their own bodies' (Livingstone, p. 642). Mr Shooter (*Kafirs of Natal*, p. 162) corroborates this statement also, adding that 'departed spirits are believed to revisit the earth and appear to their descendants in the form of certain serpents.'

Bondage to fear. The gloomy terror everywhere inspired alike by the religions of the wild American and by those of Oceanica (e. g. Part III. pp. 131, 132, 184) has found its counterpart again among the various tribes of Central Africa: 'Their religion, if such it may be called, is one of dread. Numbers of charms are employed to avert the evils with which they feel themselves to be encompassed. Occasionally you meet a man, more cautious or more timid than the rest, with twenty or thirty charms hung round his neck' (Livingstone, p. 435). Again: 'There is nothing more heart-rending than their death-wails. When the natives turn their eyes to the future world, they have a view cheerless enough of their own utter helplessness and hopelessness. They fancy themselves completely in the power of the disembodied spirits, and look upon the prospect of following them, as the greatest of misfortunes. Hence they are constantly deprecating the wrath of departed souls, believing that, if they are appeased, there is no other cause of death but witchcraft, which may be averted by charms' (p. 440).

Circumcision. I have already had occasion to notice the prevalence of this rite in Southern Africa, and also pointed out some traces of it in the Egypt of the Pharaohs, as well as in far distant parts of heathendom: see above, pp. 106, 107, and n. 1, and the references there given.

Black and white men. The following declaration of a 'rain-doctor,' as recorded by Dr Livingstone (p. 24) is identical with a tradition already noted (Part III. p. 185) in speaking of the Fijí islands: 'He made black men first, and did not love us, as he did the white men. He made you beautiful, and gave you clothing and guns, &c.; but toward us he had no heart. He gave us nothing, except the assegai and cattle and rain-making; and he did not give us hearts like yours. We never love each

other.' A legend of precisely the same import (Part III. p. 193, n. 2) is still preserved among the Tongans (and not improbably among some other of the Polynesian islanders). There too it is the elder son who is depraved and idle, and his children who are destined to change colour, and to pass from white to black, by reason of some moral delinquency of their progenitor,—'because the heart is bad.'

Veneration of the Ficus Indica. Attention has been drawn already to the marvellous frequency with which the nations of South-Eastern Asia and the wilder tribes of Oceanica have betrayed their reverence for the banyan-tree or Indian fig (Part III. p. 179): but, strange as this may seem, the regions of Central Africa explored of late years by Dr Livingstone have yielded further testimonies of precisely the same kind. In speaking of the Balonda, he says (p. 290): 'They regard this tree with some sort of veneration as a medicine or charm.' And again, referring to a village in the Barotse valley, he writes (p. 495): 'At this village there is a real Indian banyan-tree, which has spread itself over a considerable space by means of roots from its branches. . . It is curious that trees of this family are looked upon with veneration, and all the way from the Barotse to Loanda are thought to be preservatives from evil.'

The examples here adduced of some original tie connecting the barbaric tribes of Southern and Central Africa, not only with the earliest masters of the land of Egypt, but with primitive layers of population in Asia, in America, in Oceanica, will serve a highly moral purpose, if they tend to silence the suspicions now again in circulation with regard to the admissibility of Africans into the family of man. I deem it a most cruel falsehood to maintain that any even of the lowest negro tribes are unsusceptible of mental and moral culture; but instead of urging my own opinion, I transcribe the words of one who, by his long and patient study of the question, earned a fairer claim to speak about it than a multitude of philo-slavers: 'The civilisation,' writes Prichard, 'of many African nations is much superior to that of the aborigines of Europe during the ages which preceded the conquests of the Goths and Swedes in the north, and the Romans in the Southern parts. The old Finnish inhabitants of Scandinavia had long, as it has been proved by the learned investigations of Rûhs, the religion of fetishes, and a vocabulary as scanty as that of the most barbarous Africans. They had

lived from immemorial ages without laws, or government, or social union ; every individual the supreme arbiter, in every thing, of his own actions ; and they displayed as little capability of emerging from the squalid sloth of their rude and merely animal existence. When conquered by people of Indo-German race, who brought with them from the East the rudiments of mental culture, they emerged more slowly from their pristine barbarism than many of the native African nations have done. Even at the present day there are hordes in various parts of Northern Asia, whose heads have the form belonging to the Tatars, and to Slavonians and other Europeans, but are below many of the African tribes in civilisation.'

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